



Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5627th meeting

Wednesday, 31 January 2007, 9.30 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Bader
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Mr. Miller

Agenda

Post-conflict peacebuilding

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting was called to order at 9.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Post-conflict peacebuilding

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Afghanistan, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Egypt, El Salvador, Germany, Guatemala, Jamaica, Japan, Nigeria, the Republic of Korea, Senegal and Uruguay, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I am pleased to invite the following participants under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council: His Excellency Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, President of the Economic and Social Council; His Excellency Mr. Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins, Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission; Ms. Carolyn McAskie, Assistant Secretary-General in the Peacebuilding Support Office; Mr. Oscar Avalle, Special Representative of the World Bank to the United Nations; and Mr. Reinhard Munzberg, Special Representative of the International Monetary Fund to the United Nations.

Also in accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I am pleased to invite the following participants under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council: the Permanent Representative of Burundi, His Excellency Mr. Joseph Ntakirutimana; the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands, His Excellency

Mr. Frank Majoor; the Permanent Representative of Norway, His Excellency Mr. Johan Løvald; and the Deputy Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, His Excellency Mr. Sylvester Ekundayo Rowe.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ntakirutimana (Burundi), Mr. Majoor (the Netherlands), Mr. Løvald (Norway) and Mr. Rowe (Sierra Leone) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

This morning's meeting of the Security Council deals with one of the most significant challenges on the agenda of the United Nations — that is, how to help countries emerging from crisis to overcome the consequences of conflict, to prevent the renewal of those conflicts and to put those countries on the path to sustainable development.

It was for this very reason that it was decided at the United Nations summit in 2005 to create the Peacebuilding Commission. The beginning of the Commission's work was one of the most important and tangible achievements reached by Member States in the reform of the Organization.

We hope that the discussion in the Security Council and the forthcoming discussion in the General Assembly will give additional impetus to a mutually supportive partnership between these two organs and among all those who are contributing to the peacebuilding process, and that it will facilitate the constructive work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I should like to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Speakers with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in the Chamber and to deliver a condensed version when speaking.

I shall now give the floor to the President of the Economic and Social Council, His Excellency Mr. Dalius Čekuolis.

Mr. Čekuolis: I wish to thank the Russian presidency of the Council for convening today's

meeting and for inviting me to this debate, which, together with other relevant steps, will help us to improve the contributions of the United Nations bodies to the success of the Peacebuilding Commission, in line with their specific competencies and mandates.

Time and again it has been noted that there is a strong correlation between low levels of development and violent conflict. Nine out of 10 countries with the lowest human development indicators have experienced conflict at some point or another since 1990. According to World Bank estimates, a civil war lasts at least seven years on average, with the growth rate of the local economy reduced by 2.2 per cent each year. This downward spiral of poverty, conflict and added impoverishment is difficult to reverse.

In broader terms, given the linkage between development, peace and security, more focused efforts should be made to advance and oversee the implementation of internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The Economic and Social Council was given the mandate by the 2005 World Summit to focus on this implementation through its annual ministerial reviews. In doing so, the Council intends to continually assess how conflict is affecting the implementation of the United Nations development agenda.

International assistance can play a major role in addressing the challenges faced by conflict-prone countries and in filling some of their capacity gaps. The recommendations made by experts on the volume and sustainability of international aid to fragile States and countries emerging from conflicts, therefore, deserve our full consideration. In particular, research suggests that the optimal period for absorbing increased aid is about six years after a peace settlement, by which time donors tend to move on to another country in crisis.

The Economic and Social Council is ready to assist the Peacebuilding Commission in utilizing these insights in its plans and activities. We believe that our respective intergovernmental bodies should exchange views, analyses and policy recommendations on these and other matters.

Another example of the perspectives the Economic and Social Council can share with the Peacebuilding Commission is related, for instance, to policy actions on youth employment, because unemployed young people in countries where this

phenomenon is massive are an easy target for recruitment into armed groups. As recently as last year, the Council considered the issue and developed policy recommendations regarding the mainstreaming of youth employment into national development plans and development cooperation programmes. The Council continues to be concerned about the situation in some regions of the world, particularly in Africa and the Middle East, where the two phenomena of youth unemployment and conflict continue to feed on each other.

Through increased interaction and readiness to share relevant experience, we can contribute to strengthening the value added by the Peacebuilding Commission. In this respect, the Economic and Social Council is ready to share its lessons learned, especially given that the pioneering work of the Council's ad hoc advisory groups on countries emerging from conflict was, in a way, a forerunner of this qualitatively new organ — the Peacebuilding Commission, a body meant to ensure an integrated approach to peacebuilding on the basis of the links between security, development, rule of law and human rights.

The Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Haiti, Guinea-Bissau and Burundi have been successful in promoting coordinated support to post-conflict countries through a comprehensive approach to relief, peace and development. In an effort to assess and constantly improve its work, the Council has carried out a lessons-learned exercise through the experience of the ad hoc advisory groups, including the one on Burundi, which is now being considered by the Peacebuilding Commission. I would like to share some of these lessons learned with members of the Security Council.

First of all, the experience of the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Burundi and Guinea-Bissau highlighted the need for appropriate mechanisms to mobilize donors and to promote the translation of pledges into disbursements. Secondly, there is a need to go beyond immediate problem-solving in the countries considered to defining, from the very beginning, a vision towards longer-term rehabilitation and support, in order to ensure that assistance is sustainable and is not undermined by organizational and functional problems encountered on the ground. Thirdly, the international community should maintain concrete development support to a country in question, even when factors on the ground — for example, an

electoral process — may incline donors to adopt a “wait and see” approach. Fourthly, it is essential to make good coordinated use of the work of United Nations entities to complement the policy approach of the intergovernmental body through strong support at the technical and operational level. Fifthly and finally, a good articulation must be ensured between United Nations actors and regional partners of the countries concerned, including regional and subregional organizations, regional development banks and the United Nations Regional Commissions.

These and other lessons emerging from the continued work of the Economic and Social Council’s ad hoc advisory groups can be further discussed and brought to bear on the future work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

We hope that we can further explore practical modalities for interaction between the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, in line with General Assembly resolutions. Our common objective should be to mobilize the whole institutional machinery of the United Nations to promote across-the-range policy approaches and best practices to develop answers to the complex and difficult needs of post-conflict countries and prevent their relapse into conflict. The meeting today is a good step in that direction.

For its part, the Economic and Social Council is ready to contribute to the best of its ability, collectively or through its individual members on the Peacebuilding Commission’s Organizational Committee, to developing the strategic goals and defining a viable peacebuilding strategy of the Commission, thereby ensure its lasting added value.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Ūekuolis for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, His Excellency Mr. Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins.

Mr. Gaspar Martins: Mr. President, I am pleased and wish to thank you and the Russian presidency for the opportunity to participate in this meeting on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in my capacity as Chairman of that Commission. This is indeed an important occasion to reflect on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission with one of the

principal bodies that created it, through its resolution 1645 (2005).

I am equally pleased that the General Assembly has scheduled for 6 February a similar debate, which I hope will provide an opportunity for the wider participation of the membership of our Organization — a fact which we in the Peacebuilding Commission welcome.

Although the Peacebuilding Commission has been in existence for less than a year, questions are already being asked about the results it has achieved during that period. That is a legitimate concern and it speaks to the high expectations that the international community, in particular the Member States, have for that new organ of the United Nations. Yet, we should recognize that peacebuilding is by nature a complex and long-term process which requires persistent and long-term commitment by all. This debate today will, I hope, contribute to mobilizing the commitment needed so that we can move faster, providing more clarity in the discussion of some outstanding procedural issues in the workings of the Commission. Let us all agree that our theoretical differences in New York are meaningless to those who are directly suffering from the consequences of conflict on the ground. What matters for them are concrete actions and not just eloquent statements.

The Peacebuilding Commission will be relevant and succeed only if it paves the way for an engaged partnership and practical actions by its members, as well as by the donor community, regional organizations, multilateral financial institutions and the Governments, civil society and private sectors of countries under consideration by the Peacebuilding Commission. It is that active partnership that will produce the incremental and tangible results we are seeking. Our common efforts are and should be aimed at reinforcing confidence in post-conflict communities, ensuring that countries do not relapse into conflict and that they move swiftly on the path to stability, recovery and development.

The fact that allocations were made from the Peacebuilding Fund for both Burundi and Sierra Leone is an important first step in underlining international commitment and attention. That will certainly have a catalyzing effect, but we do need a long-term commitment from donors to remain engaged with the countries throughout the peacebuilding effort. Equally,

the two countries need to make greater efforts to lay the foundations for sustainable peace.

I am particularly pleased that we are about to decide on country-specific plans of action and a programme of action for the Organizational Committee, which I believe will allow the Commission to review and monitor the implementation of its decisions on a more regular basis. The recent staffing of the Peacebuilding Support Office is also a welcome development. The Office should continue to be given the necessary attention and resources, as it constitutes a vital instrument for the functioning of the Commission.

I am pleased by the contributions recently made to the Peacebuilding Fund. That is an encouraging trend, though the amount available is still insufficient when compared to the needs of the two countries and the urgency of meeting those needs.

The Peacebuilding Commission is a body to which the Council has dedicated much valuable time to establishing. It is the Council's body, and it will perform only in accordance with the means that the Council and the international community put at its disposal in order to meet the high expectations of the populations of countries emerging from conflict. In order to meet the objectives expected from it on the ground, the Commission must be a real bridge for all stakeholders to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, in conformity with the decision made by the heads of State at the September Summit.

I would like to seize this opportunity to commend the Governments of Burundi and Sierra Leone for providing a legal and political framework by establishing national bodies and a suitable environment to facilitate the work of the Commission on the ground. That is their primary responsibility and the role of national ownership. As stated by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan,

"[w]here peacebuilding succeeds it is always the leadership of domestic actors that is the essential ingredient of success. No amount of international engagement can substitute for domestic political leaders shouldering their responsibilities and leading their people towards peace and development" (A/61/1, para. 76).

Finally, I want to acknowledge the fact that the new body has a number of issues to address in order to improve its effectiveness and enhance its impact. While we have to acknowledge that the Peacebuilding Commission is still in the early phase of its existence, we also need to be decisive in tackling some of the critical challenges in relation to its working methods and strategic vision. That requires a collective commitment, and I hope that, as we move forward, all members of the Commission and of the United Nations will contribute to that effort.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Gaspar Martins for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to the Assistant Secretary-General in the Peacebuilding Support Office, Ms. Carolyn McAskie.

Ms. McAskie: I thank the Security Council for the opportunity to be here today. I am very pleased to provide a short statement in my capacity as head of the Peacebuilding Support Office.

The links between the Commission and the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council are critical, and I know that members of the Commission are exploring how to make the relationships among and between those bodies as effective as possible. How to deal with the critical post-conflict period has escaped our collective best efforts, despite several attempts to address the issue through transitional mechanisms. The creation of those new mechanisms — the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund — offers a new opportunity to address that critical and fragile period in the life of a country ravaged by conflict.

For that to happen, the Peacebuilding Commission has an important role to play in bringing all the actors together. That means that it must and will take on board the work of the Council, as well as that of the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly, the United Nations agencies and all the partners, be they the financial institutions and other donors, the regional players, internal actors — such as civil society — and any others, as appropriate. That does not mean duplication; that does not mean overlap. Rather, it is the strategic way in which the Commission will work by bringing everyone together.

There is general agreement that, if it is to be most effective, the work must play out at the country level. The test of relevance for all of us will be to apply that approach in a way that will bring results for Burundi and Sierra Leone, in the first instance, and others as time goes on. The Chair and the Vice-Chairs will be working closely over the next several weeks with members of the Commission and with the Governments of Burundi and Sierra Leone to frame the next stage of the Commission's work, building on the first round of work accomplished so far.

For its part, the Support Office will do everything it can to support the Commission in that important work. The Office must work with the players in the United Nations system, both in the field and at Headquarters, to ensure that the strategies of the Commission are applied to all relevant areas of the United Nations work.

An important part of the Commission's mandate will be to marshal resources. While we all agree that the Peacebuilding Commission is not another donor forum, its work should generate significant additional resources for countries committed to staying on track for peace, to prevent their becoming, once again, the forgotten crises.

The Secretary-General just announced, a few days ago, the first allocation under the Peacebuilding Fund — \$35 million for Burundi — and will soon make an announcement regarding Sierra Leone. The Fund, however, can act only as a catalyst. Alone, it cannot address the peacebuilding resource needs of countries emerging from conflict. The role of the Peacebuilding Commission in marshalling resources will be much broader, although the Peacebuilding Fund — which has been set up rapidly and which has attracted very significant contributions from donors — is an extremely useful start.

It is only by bringing all the actors together that the Peacebuilding Commission can fulfil its mandate to advise on and propose integrated strategies for peacebuilding and to identify critical elements of peacebuilding in the countries under its consideration, bringing them together under an integrated strategic approach. It is in that way that the Commission can work inclusively to define its own objectives, enter into agreements with the countries under its consideration and provide guidance to the various actors as to how they can meet the broad goals of

peacebuilding across the range of political, security, human rights and economic and social interventions — always under the lead of the country concerned itself.

As I said, my Office is committed to supporting the Commission and the overall efforts of the international community in that important endeavour, including through extracting lessons learned and becoming the repository for peacebuilding advice within the United Nations Secretariat. We are now closer to completing the staffing requirements for that stage of the Office's work, and will continue to discuss with members of the Commission their vision for the work of the Support Office, in particular in the context of this year's budget discussions.

Under the leadership of El Salvador, in its capacity as Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, work on lessons learned will begin soon, with the establishment of a working group that will include broad participation by all Commission members.

In the long run, peacebuilding must not be another layer of work for Governments or the United Nations or donors on the ground. Instead, it should define the way in which we frame our interventions to ensure that we can most effectively respond to the immediate needs of a post-conflict society and keep hard-won peace processes on a sustainable track.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ms. McAskie for her statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Johan Løvald, Permanent Representative of Norway.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): Today's discussion — like the subsequent discussion in the General Assembly on 6 February — is an important occasion to highlight the importance of peacebuilding. We must maintain and, if possible, further increase the momentum behind our peacebuilding efforts. While our focus at all times must be on concrete results at the country level, we are all also conscious of the importance of this endeavour for the United Nations and the international community as a whole.

Since entering office, the Government of Burundi has embarked on a series of planning and consultation processes in order to prepare development strategies to move Burundi from an emergency situation to a more normal pattern of development. Those strategies include the Government's emergency programme, the

Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the United Nations Common Humanitarian Action Plan and Joint Road Map and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. Finally, I should also mention the establishment by the Government of Burundi of a joint Government-United Nations peacebuilding committee. Thus, much is already being done at the country level. Burundi has made progress in consolidating peace. However, the situation is still fragile, and continued international support is needed.

The Peacebuilding Commission held two meetings on the situation in Burundi last fall. The Government of Burundi participated actively at the ministerial level on both occasions. I should like to thank the Government of Burundi for the very close cooperation extended to the Peacebuilding Commission, including myself, during my visit to Bujumbura last fall.

The identification of priorities for peacebuilding and how to address them was the focus of those two country-specific meetings. At the first country-specific meeting three main critical peacebuilding challenges were identified in Burundi, namely: promoting good governance, strengthening the rule of law and the security sector and ensuring community recovery. Based on those critical challenges, a number of important peacebuilding priorities were identified. Among other things, those included strengthening national dialogue, continued efforts to include women in the consolidation of peace, sustained political support from countries in the region and strengthening of the Government's ability to deliver on basic services, inter alia through budgetary support.

The Peacebuilding Commission's engagement with Burundi is now entering a new phase. The Commission will, in the near future, finalize its work plan and commence work on an integrated approach to peacebuilding, clearly outlining Burundi's commitments and the response to be provided by the international community in critical areas. At the same time, we should continue to work with the Government to monitor progress in the critical areas already identified. In that regard, I would like to welcome the decision by the second Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to establish a regional follow-up mechanism — to include a Conference secretariat — and to establish its offices in Bujumbura. I am sure that the Peacebuilding

Commission would like to discuss how we can also support peacebuilding in that regional perspective.

On 29 January, at the African Union Summit held in Addis Ababa, the Secretary-General formally announced a Peacebuilding Fund country envelope of \$35 million for Burundi. I welcome that development. In the Peacebuilding Commission, we must now decide how we can build on that and achieve a catalytic effect. We recognize, of course, that funding through the Peacebuilding Fund can only provide initial support. Much more will be needed from other sources.

Donor per capita assistance to Burundi remains low. The international community must support national efforts to address the priorities and gaps identified by the Government. The upcoming donors' round table to be held at Bujumbura from 15 to 16 March will provide an opportunity to respond to those challenges. The Peacebuilding Commission would obviously like to consider that event and discuss how integrated peacebuilding efforts can complement the results of the round table.

Let me also offer a very brief national point of view. We are humbled by the enormous challenges facing Burundi. The Norwegian Government is committed to doing what it can in order to achieve durable peace and economic development. The visit to Burundi by Norway's Minister for Development Cooperation last month laid the groundwork for a bilateral programme in support of development and peacebuilding. In consequence, Norway will in the near future establish an embassy in Bujumbura.

To sum up, successful peacebuilding will necessitate sustained political and material support in the years to come, from all stakeholders: the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, donors, civil society and regional actors. Similarly, continued national ownership will be key, based on an inclusive approach within which all relevant segments of society can contribute.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Løvald for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Frank Majoor, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. Majoor (Netherlands): I very much welcome this opportunity, early in the new year, to participate in the Security Council's discussion on the Peacebuilding Commission, and to do so in my capacity as

Chairperson of the Commission's country-specific meeting on Sierra Leone.

Allow me to refer to my statement before the Security Council made on 22 December 2006 (see S/PV.5608), when I was invited to brief Council members on the outcome of the country-specific meetings on Sierra Leone that had taken place in October and December 2006. While various activities have been ongoing in Sierra Leone itself, as well as at an informal level within the Peacebuilding Commission, I believe that my 22 December statement still very much reflects the state of play as concerns the Commission's involvement with Sierra Leone. Allow me, therefore, to refrain from repeating the overview that I presented at that time and instead make a number of additional remarks that may feed into today's discussions.

First, I very much welcome the interest shown by the Security Council in the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission, as demonstrated by today's debate. The same is true for the interest shown by other bodies within the United Nations, such as the General Assembly — which intends to discuss the Commission's work next week — and the Economic and Social Council, and by those outside the United Nations. Today represents a good opportunity to strengthen our common focus on our shared interests, that is, to assist Sierra Leone and Burundi — as the first countries under consideration — in building peace and in preventing any possible relapse into conflict.

Secondly, I wish to stress that good progress has been made in Sierra Leone in addressing the identified gaps in critical areas. Allow me to highlight just a few recent developments.

A national steering committee on peacebuilding has been established by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations to relate to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund. It will bring together Government, the United Nations, donors and civil society representatives to jointly address peacebuilding priorities.

Also in Sierra Leone, consultations are ongoing to finalize the priority plan for funding from the Peacebuilding Fund. Once the review process stipulated in the terms of reference for the Fund is completed, it is expected that a country envelope in excess of the initially indicated \$25 million will be made available.

At the Peacebuilding Commission's most recent country-specific meeting on Sierra Leone, members of the Commission urged the international community to lend support to the Government of Sierra Leone in order to broaden its donor base and secure assistance, including further debt relief. I am pleased to note that the World Bank's International Development Association and the International Monetary Fund have agreed that Sierra Leone has made sufficient progress to reach the completion point under the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative.

The Commission also called on the international community to provide, in a timely manner, adequate resources and support for the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections, including capacity-building to ensure women's equal participation in the political process. In this area a great deal of progress has been observed. The initial resource gap of \$7 million for the election has been reduced to less than \$3 million, with further pledges expected. Progress has been made in establishing an independent National Electoral Commission to prepare credible elections.

The signing of an electoral code of conduct by eight political parties, the strengthening of the Sierra Leone police and the countrywide discussions on a media code of conduct for electoral reporting are other examples of progress.

Finally, allow me to revert to the process of the Peacebuilding Commission's discussions in New York. Next week, members of the country-specific meetings on Sierra Leone will discuss a work plan for the work of the Commission on Sierra Leone. This work plan is to guide our activities in the coming months leading up to the next country-specific meeting on Sierra Leone, due to take place in March or April. It sets a timeline and defines the actions to be undertaken by the Sierra Leone Government, the United Nations system and other stakeholders. Ownership, especially at the national level, and close coordination between New York and national actors are crucial. A key focus of the work of the Commission on Sierra Leone in these coming months will be the development of an integrated approach to outline clearly the commitments made by the Government of Sierra Leone and the international community.

I am confident that in the spirit that has guided the Commission's discussions thus far, we will be able to continue to engage in meaningful discussions in the

country-specific meetings on Sierra Leone and, in the process, contribute to the building of peace in Sierra Leone. It will require the involvement of all the stakeholders: the Government of Sierra Leone, the full membership of the Peacebuilding Commission, potential other donors, the United Nations country team and the individual United Nations bodies on the ground, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector.

It will also require continued support by the Security Council, and I therefore very much welcome the Council's continued engagement regarding the Peacebuilding Commission and Sierra Leone in particular.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now give the floor to Mr. Oscar Avalle, Special Representative of the World Bank to the United Nations.

Mr. Avalle (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a privilege to address the Security Council on behalf of the World Bank during this open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. I wish to reaffirm the full support and commitment of the World Bank to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, in all its aspects and at all levels.

As members of the international community, we cannot afford to ignore the urgent problems currently faced by countries in crisis. It is our obligation to speedily provide the urgent assistance necessary to respond to the needs of those countries. In this context, we believe that the United Nations system plays a critical role in conflict prevention and resolution, but we cannot forget that after the conflict is over the work must continue, with support for reconstruction and the economic and social recovery and development of the countries affected. Like Ms. McAskie, we believe that the Peacebuilding Commission is a useful and effective instrument which makes it possible to deepen our engagement with the United Nations system and to continue to work together in a coordinated manner, responding to the needs of affected countries.

It should be recalled that more than 16 per cent of the population of the world, a billion people, live — or rather, exist — in extreme poverty and are directly affected by civil war or are at high risk of being so affected in the very near future. The legacy of conflict is well known; it is a terrible legacy, and that is why over the last decade the World Bank has significantly

expanded its conceptual work in the area of the reconstruction of countries affected by conflict.

Our research has confirmed that security and development are inherently connected. But we must also work together with all stakeholders, offering the necessary holistic support for peacemaking processes and drawing up genuine long-term development plans that turn into concrete action on the ground. This is why we believe that the work of the Peacebuilding Commission is critical and should yield concrete results in the real world and in the field. The work of the Commission and all of our work will thus be judged not only by our work here in New York, but primarily by the concrete results achieved in the countries concerned. The World Bank has actively supported the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, with the main objective of improving coordination and cooperation of all of the actors involved. The World Bank is committed to cooperating even more closely with the Commission both in New York and in the field, with all of the resources that we can provide, and that have been requested, insofar as possible.

We welcome all of the efforts being made by the Commission in order to create a more focused agenda that would lead to specific results for the benefit of the affected countries. Unfortunately, thus far, we have still have not been able to take part directly in all of the Commission's meetings, as originally stipulated in resolution 1645 (2005).

I would conclude by saying that we are ready to work jointly with all of our partners to ensure that there is international support and the necessary strategic cooperation among all of the parties that are committed to promoting the peacebuilding processes and to achieve sustainable development.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Avalle for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Reinhard Munzberg, Special Representative of the International Monetary Fund to the United Nations.

Mr. Munzberg: Mr. President, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to intervene at this meeting of the Security Council on the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Peacebuilding Commission is a very useful forum where all relevant aspects of a country in a post-conflict situation can be addressed in a comprehensive

fashion. We are prepared to cooperate actively with that forum. As members know, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is already involved in a number of post-conflict cases, including in the two countries that are on the agenda of the country-specific meetings of the Commission. We share the Commission's emphasis on work on concrete country cases and on country ownership of strategies. Our activities and those of the Commission need to be well integrated in those country-owned strategies.

The Commission has made good progress, together with the countries concerned, in identifying priority areas that need to be addressed. We have interacted with the Commission in the country meetings and also in the field. Interactive discussions are of particular value.

We appreciate the fact that the IMF will be invited to meetings of the Commission, as stated in the resolution establishing the Peacebuilding Commission. In that regard, it would be useful if the issue of attendance at meetings of the Organizational Committee could be clarified.

We are satisfied that the Commission will be an advisory body, and, accordingly, we will inform our governing organs of the progress of the Commission's work in order to ensure that their decisions are informed by the Commission's deliberations on the whole spectrum of aspects relevant to a specific case.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Munzberg for his statement.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Joseph Ntakirutimana, Permanent Representative of Burundi.

Mr. Ntakirutimana (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): It is an honour for me to be able to speak before the members of the Security Council on an important topic, peacebuilding in post-conflict countries. This subject is today of concern to the various stakeholders determined to offer space for stability, development and hope to countries shattered by conflicts.

On behalf of my delegation and on my own account, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having invited Burundi to this debate. I would also like to express my gratitude, and that of the people of Burundi, to all the members of the Peacebuilding Commission for the extensive support and encouragement they provided during the country-specific meetings where Burundi was on the

Commission's agenda. Similarly, I would also like to express appreciation for the efforts of the Peacebuilding Support Office, which, in a new and difficult context, is trying to make the Commission a success.

In July 2006, the delegation of Burundi was able to offer to the members of the Peacebuilding Commission a comprehensive view of the situation in Burundi. Commission members were able to become familiar with the desolation and poverty through which my country is struggling after more than 10 years of civil war.

During the country-specific meeting on Burundi last October, the delegation of Burundi offered a detailed picture of the effects of war in several areas of national life. The members of the Commission were able to see for themselves the immense needs facing the Government of Burundi. Our delegation was also able to stress the many efforts being made by the Government in order to help Burundi emerge from an economic, political and social situation that is significantly impacted by the adverse consequences of conflict.

Those efforts were also noted and welcomed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which have been tracking the evolution of the Burundian economy and which were also invited to the same meeting.

Following the October meeting, the delegation of Burundi returned home with the task of preparing a presentation for the country-specific meeting on Burundi that was planned for December 2006. The Government of Burundi had to establish a list of urgent priorities, formulate the technical specifications of those priorities, and so on. My Government immediately set up a national peacebuilding commission, which has worked day and night, untiringly, in synergy with the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB), the diplomats on the ground and civil society.

Following that country-specific meeting on Burundi on 12 December 2006, the Peacebuilding Support Office pledged to the Burundian delegation a package designed to finance the projects presented at that meeting. We are extremely grateful for that.

Once again, I would like to thank all of the countries that have already contributed to the

Peacebuilding Fund. By doing so, they have made it possible for the new Commission to be operational and to get down to brass tacks.

While welcoming the work that has already been done by the Commission, my delegation would like to make the following observations. First of all, seven months after its creation, the Commission should finally become operational and deal with the implementation of projects that were selected in December 2006. Secondly, my delegation would like to understand the mechanism or mechanisms for disbursing the allocated funds and would especially hope that these mechanisms might be made more flexible.

Thirdly, my country is organizing a donor round table in March 2007, for which I would like to request the support of the Commission at three levels. First, we would like to see members of the Commission attend the donor round table, which we plan to hold on 14 March 2007. Secondly, we would like the Peacebuilding Commission to provide ongoing support to the Burundian Government so as to galvanize donors, ensuring the success of the round table. Thirdly, given the fact that most of the donors are members of the Peacebuilding Commission, we urge each member to be present at the March meeting and possibly to announce a contribution.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Ntakirutimana for his statement.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Sylvester Ekundayo Rowe, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Rowe (Sierra Leone): It is an honour for Sierra Leone to have been selected as one of the first two countries to be placed on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. It is also an honour for my delegation to speak as a country-specific participant at this meeting of the Security Council.

We are grateful to the United Nations and the international community for their continued engagement with the situation in Sierra Leone following the devastating rebel war. That engagement has been demonstrated in many practical ways. For instance, following the successful peacekeeping operation — the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone — the Organization established its first Integrated Office in Sierra Leone. The Office — now

in its second year — is, indeed, an experiment, and hopefully it will become a model of United Nations post-peacekeeping. It has set the pace for a similar mechanism in Burundi.

It will also be recalled that a few years ago Sierra Leone became the subject of another experiment: an experiment in transitional justice, in the form of a hybrid Special Court, based on national and international criminal law, to try individuals accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Incidentally, as we all know, that experiment has been working well but is facing funding problems. The Special Court cannot become a model without the financial resources necessary to conclude its work within the established time frame.

Now Sierra Leone finds itself the subject of yet another experiment in post-conflict cooperation, namely, as a specific country under consideration by the new Peacebuilding Commission. We are occupying an enviable position. My delegation would like to assure the Security Council that Sierra Leone will make good use of its position in this worthy experiment. We are committed to the integrated approach to peacebuilding that the United Nations has adopted in post-conflict peacebuilding leading to sustainable development.

Sierra Leone had great expectations regarding the Commission. We saw it — and still see it — as a supplementary but effective instrument for facilitating the process of early post-conflict recovery. We have faith in its commitment to help us to address some of the problems and challenges that require urgent attention, and our expectations remain high.

As others have pointed out, the Peacebuilding Commission is new. It is still going through the proverbial teething stage. Perhaps one could say that it is even too early to make a definitive and objective evaluation of its substantive work. However, in the view of my delegation, the results of the recent country-specific meetings augur well for the future success of the Commission. For Sierra Leone, a highlight of those meetings was the conclusion that an envelope of approximately \$25 million was expected to be made available as an initial — I stress: initial — contribution towards the implementation of our priority programmes.

It is in this regard that my delegation would like to emphasize that any assessment of the work of the

Peacebuilding Commission must be based on its objectives and mandate as outlined in the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

First of all, we should always bear in mind that the Commission is a special mechanism created to address the special needs of a special group or category of countries. Accordingly, the process of meeting those special needs may require some elements of creativity, flexibility and adaptability.

Secondly, the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission reflects a sense of urgency — we are in a hurry. If, indeed, the Commission is to help ensure that countries emerging from conflict do not relapse into conflict, and if provision has been made for the Commission to deal with any situation where a country is at risk of or already relapsing into armed conflict, it follows that the Commission and the international community must act speedily to avert imminent crisis.

As far as achieving the objectives of the Peacebuilding Commission is concerned, the bottom line is “resources, resources, resources”. Indeed, throughout the mandate of the Commission, the key words are “assistance” and “resources” — and we can look at the mandate and objectives again. Of course, the Commission was created to provide advice and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict recovery. Of course, its job — or part of its job — is to mobilize sustained international attention on the needs of our countries, even beyond the period of post-conflict recovery. However, we should bear in mind — and I would like to emphasize this — that the Commission is expected to assist our countries in laying the foundation for sustainable development, to mobilize assistance and, I stress, to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and help ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities.

This brings me to the issue of delivery, which is very close to our heart. My delegation believes that the most effective way that the international community can continue to demonstrate its continued engagement with Sierra Leone and other least developed countries emerging from conflict is through the timely delivery of the necessary assistance to meet the special needs of the countries concerned. My delegation notes with satisfaction that the most recent country-specific meeting of the Commission stressed that every effort should be made to deliver the Peacebuilding Fund

country assistance envelope for Sierra Leone in January 2007 so that implementation of the agreed short-term priorities can commence immediately.

The Sierra Leone delegation is aware that the processes of mobilizing and marshalling resources are complex. They obviously require extensive coordination and consultations at various levels — at the national level and at the international level. However, timely delivery of assistance is crucial to the success of the whole recovery process. We are encouraged by the commitment of the Peacebuilding Commission and the international community, especially those countries that have made generous contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund. We applaud them. We want just to take this opportunity today to make an appeal, in the form of a reminder that before the ruthless rebel war, Sierra Leone was one of the least developed countries of the world. The conflict made an already precarious situation even worse. While we share many or most of the problems that other post-conflict countries face, we should realize that Sierra Leone is, in a sense, unique. It should be treated according to its own particular circumstances.

My delegation is confident that within the next few days the Secretary-General will announce the allocation of an appreciable amount from the Peacebuilding Fund that is commensurate with the special needs and critical priorities that we outlined in the Peacebuilding Commission last year.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Rowe for his statement.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Panama believes that this is an opportune moment to recall that heads of State or Government, meeting during the 2005 World Summit, acknowledged the need for the Organization to carry out a coordinated, consistent and integrated peacebuilding and reconciliation effort in countries that have emerged from conflict. To meet that need, they established the Peacebuilding Commission with the participation of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

That is why Panama believes it is appropriate that both the General Assembly and the Security Council have decided to conduct an initial review of how, in terms of form and substance, the Commission is carrying out the task entrusted to it. After all, the maintenance of international peace and security is a

task entrusted to both the Assembly and the Council by the Charter itself. The mission of Panama believes that that task must be carried out in a coherent, coordinated and comprehensive manner.

The objective of this consultation process should be an initial assessment of the Commission's working mechanisms and decision-making processes so that all of these organs, each within its own perspective, can have the information and knowledge they need in order to provide the Commission, if necessary, with timely assistance or advice so that it can carry out the task entrusted to it by the heads of State and Government.

We acknowledge that the Peacebuilding Commission is still in the process of finding its own identity. However, we applaud the efforts of the Organizational Committee and the Peacebuilding Support Office in preparing for meetings on specific cases, assessing the progress on those cases and drawing up a plan based on the requests of the Governments of Sierra Leone and Burundi.

We expect and are resolved that the Peacebuilding Commission will distinguish itself through effective and efficient performance. To that end, each and every one of us who are involved must maintain a firm commitment to act with the promptness and transparency that this responsibility requires. The Commission's function must be to coordinate the available resources in a comprehensive, rigorous and coherent manner in order to make it easier for the countries under its auspices to have the programmes, institutions and capacities that will enable them to take the necessary measures to achieve economically sustainable and socially responsible development.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the fact that the Security Council is today considering the role of the Peacebuilding Commission. We highlight the participation in this debate by the President of the Economic and Social Council, the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission and the delegations in charge of following up on the cases of Sierra Leone and Burundi, as well as representatives of the major international financial institutions, whose statements will enrich this debate.

The Peacebuilding Commission is one of the outcomes of the 25 Summit, which reaffirmed our confidence in multilateralism as a way to face the new challenges arising in the transition from the

maintenance of international peace and security to stability and development. If it is to carry out that mandate, this new organ must be as useful and effective as possible. That is undoubtedly the spirit that, we are sure, we all share as we take part in this debate.

Peru supports the efforts to sustain the peacemaking and reconstruction processes in countries emerging from violent armed conflict, and it participates in peacekeeping operations dealing with such cases. We are aware that recent history has demonstrated that the premature withdrawal of peace operations puts countries back into a situation of crisis and violence, which no one wants; that conflicts seemingly overcome have re-emerged; and that the populations involved lose faith in the effectiveness of these peacemaking processes.

Prolonged conflicts create a perverse dynamic of force and destruction as permanent instruments of power and even of survival. To counteract that, we must reconstruct the social fabric, establish a culture of peace and convey the notion that the best security and the most benefits are to be found in peace, thus enhancing its social value.

That requires a comprehensive approach that includes the military and police component that restores the security environment; the rebuilding of public institutions, the rule of law and the promotion of human rights; and attention to the structural economic and social elements, the poverty, marginalization and exclusion that are at the root of many of these conflicts.

A fundamental component of peacebuilding is development. There will always be a greater risk of relapse into conflict to the extent that people feel vulnerable and see no improvement in their situation. We must lay the foundations for development in the form of institution-building, justice and respect for human rights, but also in the provision of services such as health, education, security and opportunities for economic inclusion.

In order to build a viable and sustainable peace process, it is essential that the local actors in these conflicts be committed to that process and carry it out responsibly. That element must underlie peacebuilding initiatives and is ultimately the only guarantee that armed violence will not destroy the progress that has been made. In that connection, inclusive processes are

necessary to create links of interdependence and mutual commitments and obligations among the parties involved. Thus, through the path of participation, we create common spaces for aspirations and objectives, and national identity and a feeling of belonging are affirmed.

That is why reconstruction programmes must not repeat the events that made the States fail in the first place. We must build democratic societies with viable economies — that is, States that emerge from disorder and backwardness and take charge of their own destiny. These processes must be adapted to each specific situation, in which the Peacebuilding Commission must promote the development of national capacities and institutions capable of developing organic plans and projects that provide continuity and consistency to the national effort and attract international cooperation.

It is important to appropriately define areas of work and, when possible, to establish suitable indicators that let us know about progress in the management capacity of a country emerging from conflict. Likewise, such indicators will make it possible to assess progress and the relevance of the recommendations and assistance of the Peacebuilding Commission.

We also believe that the Commission must help to improve the coordination between the United Nations and the system's agencies so that there will be appropriate leadership on the ground and a clear mandate for the tasks of peacebuilding. Moreover, reconstruction is a process that must arouse the interest of national and international private enterprise. That is why we need to formulate programmes capable of attracting such business participation. It also means that we must redouble our efforts to strengthen State institutions so as to ensure that special interests coincide with the general interest, that reconstruction programmes are transparent and that the resources generated — including those derived from the exploitation of natural resources — have increased benefits among the population. This should also be a requirement in programmes of the international financial institutions.

Let me conclude by noting that we are closely following the way in which the cases of Sierra Leone and Burundi are currently being addressed by the Peacebuilding Commission. Without doubt, it is a challenge to all of us to enable those countries are able

to make a successful transition to stability and development.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): My delegation wishes at the outset to thank the Russian Federation for its initiative to organize today's debate during its presidency of the Security Council. I wish also to welcome the President of the Economic and Social Council, the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission and Ms. Carolyn McAskie, and to thank them, and the other previous speakers, for their statements. Those statements clearly indicated everything that is at stake in ensuring that the Peacebuilding Commission is successful in its mission and outlined the all challenges that it must meet to achieve that success.

In our view, it is vital that flexible and effective interaction between the Commission and the Security Council be developed in practice; we hope that the Council will regularly consider the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. We hope too that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council will devote particular attention to the new body's work, as provided for in the resolutions that established the Commission.

While we fully endorse the statement that will be made by the presidency of the European Union, I wish to speak of some particular aspects of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Peacebuilding Commission's added value derives from its capacity to deal in a concentrated manner with problems that are specific to peacebuilding processes, by tackling the most urgent challenges. The participation in the Commission's work of all relevant actors on the ground, in particular States of the region and institutional and bilateral donors, is fundamental in that regard. Here, my delegation fully supports participation in the meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as their representatives have proposed today.

Most often, issues of institution-building — related to such areas as the rule of law, good governance and security-sector reform — are key post-conflict priorities. In many cases, those areas fall outside the realm of intervention and the capacity of development actors. By their very nature, they require close coordination of activities undertaken on the ground. I am thinking in particular of disarmament,

demobilization and reintegration processes, which lie at the intersection of peacekeeping and development concerns.

By making it possible to identify goals and priorities shared by all actors and to coordinate their activities in accordance with a timetable for intervention that is robust but adapted to immediate priorities, the Peacebuilding Commission can become an essential instrument for setting countries emerging from crisis firmly on the path to peace and sustainable development.

The first country-specific meetings, on Burundi and Sierra Leone, have made it possible to start identifying areas that are critical for the peacebuilding processes in those countries on the basis of analyses carried out by their national authorities. That is at the core of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, and it must continue with a view to precisely identifying priority actions and measures to be undertaken in areas seen as crucial to the peacebuilding process. At the end of the process, all actors in the field, first and foremost the authorities of the countries concerned, should have a road map that can form the basis for an appropriate and lasting commitment by the international community.

In that spirit, we consider that the Commission should focus its efforts at this stage on preparations for country-specific meetings concerning the countries on its agenda. The Peacebuilding Support Office, which is now operational, has a critical role to play here. We consider that speedy and appropriate distribution to Commission members of information relating to the countries concerned is essential. An inventory of actions undertaken in each of the areas critical for the peacebuilding process has already been carried out. It should now be the basis for identifying gaps and improving coordination among all peacebuilding actors in the two countries.

In addition to projects financed by the Peacebuilding Fund, the Commission's work should lead to better allocation of resources and enhanced involvement by all actors, starting with the authorities of the countries concerned. Those authorities should, of course, be closely involved in the preparation and implementation of the work of the Commission. Here, I want to pay tribute to the endeavours carried out by the authorities of Burundi and of Sierra Leone in liaison with the United Nations and other actors.

My delegation wishes in conclusion to reaffirm the importance it attaches to the goal of being able collectively and in the very near future to achieve tangible results for the countries being considered by the Commission. I wish also to stress that at the appropriate time the Security Council should fully integrate those results into its work. The Council ought to be able to share in the added value that the Peacebuilding Commission should bring to our collective effort to promote peace and security.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, for your initiative in organizing a debate on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. My comments supplement those that our colleague, the representative of Germany, will make on behalf of the presidency of the European Union, with which my delegation aligns itself.

Belgium has been closely involved in the initial work of the Peacebuilding Commission because we believe in the Commission and will continue to do so. I shall limit my statement to a few brief comments.

It should be recalled that the Peacebuilding Commission is multidimensional in nature. It stands at the intersection of questions relating to such concepts as security, good governance, justice, the rule of law, reconstruction and development. That is because it has two parents: the Security Council and the General Assembly. Its multidimensional nature is reflected in the Commission's primary task: to make use of the various existing reconstruction and development plans and strategies to promote the use of an integrated approach taking account of the specific needs of fragile States and the potential threats to peace and stability. The goal is not a package of limited, short-term measures, but comprehensive medium-term and long-term support enabling us to provide guidance to all bilateral and multilateral actors both within the United Nations system and outside it — as well, of course, as in the country itself.

But such an integrated approach must not exist only in the abstract: it must specifically and concretely identify the risks, priorities, shortcomings and weaknesses that require specific attention.

It is essentially the quality and credibility of this approach that will convince donors to support it by working together and by being actively involved, including in financial terms. The Commission, the

Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund should not be substitutes for current donors but should inform them and guide them, as appropriate, in order to supplement their action. Here, of course, it is vital that all players, beginning with the country concerned, and including civil society and the private sector, be fully involved in the design of these strategies.

I would like to conclude with some more practical considerations. The work of the Peacebuilding Commission takes place, first and foremost, in the country-specific meetings, which could benefit from informal discussions on specific aspects of the action to be taken in a given country with regard to peacebuilding. More sustained work could also be enhanced by relevant documents produced by various players, but above all by the Peacebuilding Support Office. We too, as the Security Council, can support the work of the Peacebuilding Commission by creating more regular and more systematic interaction with the Commission — for example, through briefings to the Council by the Chairs of the country-specific meetings. Beyond the request for general comments, we could ask the Peacebuilding Commission for guidelines on specific peacebuilding issues, and we could do so in a timely way, so that the Commission's views could be usefully integrated into our own work.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): I think the timeliness of this debate is reflected in the food for thought it is generating. At the outset, I would like to express deep appreciation and support for what Ambassador Gaspar Martins, Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, said earlier in this meeting, and to draw the attention of Council members to it. Let me quote him briefly. He said, "Let us all agree that our theoretical differences in New York are meaningless to those who are directly suffering from the consequences of conflict on the ground. What matters for them are concrete actions ..." (*Supra*). I think that this is a benchmark that must remain clear in our minds. What we do has an effect on the ground.

In general terms, I think we have to express the strongest support for the Chairman of the Organizational Committee. If he does not feel that he has the House behind him, he will not be able to be effective. As our colleague the representative of Sierra Leone has said, we will need creativity, flexibility and adaptability. When it comes to the Commission, it will

be mainly the responsibility of the Chair to inspire flexibility and creativity. But he will not be able to be creative if he does not feel that the House is behind him. That was the first point I wanted to make.

Secondly, I fully endorse the statement that my colleague, the representative of Germany, will deliver later on behalf of the European Union. I want to stress the importance of the points that he will make. Because of time constraints I will not repeat his words, except to quote briefly from what he will say, according to his advance text:

"If the Commission is to add value to peacebuilding efforts worldwide...it will have to be ambitious. It will have to be more than the tools we already have: more than a mere coordination mechanism and more than a donors conference. Promoting the development of a viable peacebuilding strategy is where the Peacebuilding Commission can really create added value."

Here, we should bear in mind what Assistant Secretary-General McAskie said on this matter.

I will now limit myself to a few additional remarks. I think that, in shaping and implementing our strategies, we will need, first, to focus strongly on institution-building, as mentioned in operative paragraph 2 (b) of Council resolution 1645 (2005) and General Assembly resolution 60/180, in line with the inspiration of the Peacebuilding Commission: to strengthen the sovereignty of post-conflict States by increasing the effectiveness and credibility of national policies and institutions, with particular reference to the rule of law. As my Belgian colleague said, this will increase the attractiveness of such States to private foreign investors.

Secondly, we will need to include a clear sequencing of actions and clear indications to all stakeholders, including donors, of what needs to be done.

Thirdly, the strategy should be based on a broad sense of ownership. National responsibility should be at the centre of the peacebuilding process. Institutional donors and relevant regional organizations should be fully on board, through regular consultations both in New York and at the country level. I hope involvement, like that we have seen today, by the World Bank and

the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will be structured and will continue in the future.

Fourthly, the involvement of civil society, including the national and international private sectors, should be deepened and widened. I will not elaborate further here.

Finally, the Peacebuilding Commission should also elaborate a system of benchmarks to monitor progress in implementation. We need monitoring, but monitoring is not just making reports after a certain number of months on what has been done. We are submerged in reports. What is needed is proactive monitoring along the way. It should not point out who is doing well or who is doing badly, but it should just point out where we stand week after week and what has to be done. We know what proactive monitoring is. This is an aspect that has to be injected into the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and into that of the parent bodies of the Commission: the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Of course, we should start developing objective criteria for phasing out the involvement of the Peacebuilding Commission in countries that are under consideration and that are successful. We should also start thinking — as we are, in fact, doing — about possible new entries on the Commission's agenda.

On a final note, we believe that the Security Council should work together with the Peacebuilding Commission with a view to designing conflict-sensitive peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies. When I say "work together", I mean not only having a meeting like today's from time to time, but rather having more interactive meetings where we can see a ways and means process, together with the General Assembly. As we are all aware, and as has to be clear in our minds, the issue is not only how the Commission can assist or advise the Council; it is also how the Council can provide the Peacebuilding Commission with operational input.

We, therefore, believe that the Security Council should, for example, request the advice of the Commission when renewing the mandates of existing peacekeeping missions or when establishing new ones, with a view to developing integrated mission planning processes. The renewal of the peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, could present the first opportunity for an early peacebuilding planning process. Then, it would act on

the advice of the Commission by supporting the crucial functions of the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone and the United Nations Operation in Burundi on the ground, with a clear mandate and ad hoc expertise. In particular, the role of the United Nations Integrated Offices in facilitating coordination and consultation among all stakeholders, including donors, should be strengthened, as has been mentioned by some of my colleagues.

Finally, the promptness of the Commission's responses to Security Council requests for advice should be promoted. We need timely advice. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office should pool their resources and coordinate their efforts in support of the Commission — and I am very grateful to Assistant Secretary-General McAskie for her earlier statement in that regard — in order to ensure smooth and efficient interaction between the two bodies and, of course, between the Peacebuilding Commission and the General Assembly.

Mr. Al-Bader (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): We thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate, the first of its kind in the Council since the Peacebuilding Commission started its work. It gives us a timely opportunity to review the Commission's activities and the best ways to support it.

I also wish to commend and thank Ambassador Ismael Gaspar Martins, Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, and Assistant Secretary-General Carolyn McAskie of the Peacebuilding Support Office for their efforts in a new field. We wish them every success in their work.

The establishment of the peacebuilding mechanism composed of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund is among the most practical and tangible steps taken by the international community to date in the context of operationalizing the indisputable concept that the dedication of resources necessary to peacebuilding in countries emerging from conflict is critical to the consolidation of stability, peace and development. Similarly, the assistance received by those countries from the international community plays a pivotal role in safeguarding against their relapse into conflict.

The Commission is still an infant entity and struggling to identify the best ways and means to achieve the objectives for which it was established. Since its inception, it has received encouraging and positive responses from the two countries on its agenda, Burundi and Sierra Leone, where national and international efforts have succeeded in ending their respective conflicts. The success of the peacebuilding phase there will no doubt consolidate those positive results. Given that the Security Council is the primary organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the success of the peacebuilding process in Burundi and Sierra Leone will be a valuable complement to the efforts of the Council, which is engaged in ongoing follow-up on the situations there.

Peacebuilding is an integrated process and a multidimensional endeavour undertaken by various United Nations entities, and cannot be broken down into its component tasks. In recognition of that vision, it was decided at the 2005 Summit to establish the Peacebuilding Commission as a consultative organ, under two resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, respectively. Thus, the Commission must work within the mandate given to it by the General Assembly and the Security Council.

If the Commission is to meet its objectives, there must be close coordination between it and the Peacebuilding Support Office and the other principal bodies of the United Nations, including the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Peacebuilding activities embody one aspect of such coordination aimed at fulfilling the vision set out in the Organization's Charter. Moreover, the Commission's mandate encourages consultation with civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in order to ensure that it receive the input of international organizations in its peacebuilding activities.

There is no doubt that several other countries are appropriate candidates for inclusion on the Commission's agenda. In every case, we must take the fundamental principles of peacebuilding into consideration by acknowledging the unique specificity of each country and hence the different methods by which peacebuilding operations should be conducted. It is important that the Commission and countries emerging from conflict agree on the methodology for undertaking peacebuilding activities if the desired objectives are to be reached.

As we have noted, the Peacebuilding Commission is an advisory body seeking to assist countries emerging from conflict in identifying the optimal approach to conducting the peacebuilding process. Its mandate also includes the mobilization of necessary international resources to attain its goals. Consequently, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Commission together constitute an integrated mechanism. We therefore appeal to the international community to donate generously and to mobilize the resources necessary to maintaining the process of peacebuilding and reconstruction.

Mr. Gayama (Congo) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of the Congo thanks you, Sir, for allowing the Council today to make an initial assessment of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, which held its first meeting on 23 June 2006. We welcome the participation in this important debate of the President of the Economic and Social Council, the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, and representatives of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, bilateral partners of the Commission and, of course, the Peacebuilding Support Office, headed by Ms. Carolyn McAskie.

The creation of the Peacebuilding Commission was a major step taken as a result of a joint effort and as the expression of a desire clearly identified by world leaders at the 2005 World Summit, in accordance with the purposes and principles of our Organization. When we recall that the official launch of the Peacebuilding Fund took place as recently as 11 October 2006, we must note along with many others who have spoken here today that the Peacebuilding Commission is just a little child that has not yet reached adolescence. If a useful assessment is to be made at this stage, it should focus on the level of attention and assistance that the Commission enjoys from those who created it, rather than on the Commission itself, which is still seeking to define itself.

This debate is timely nonetheless. It allows us to consider potential interaction and synergies between the various partners and stakeholders in this common undertaking. Such a collective and constructive commitment should be made on the basis of adherence to a few simple rules, including respect for the Commission's mission, as established under resolution 1645 (2005); appropriate distribution of work among the partners involved in order to avoid duplication; and open and transparent debate within the Commission in

order to promote concerted action to mobilize all local, regional and international actors.

Of course, such a comprehensive approach to addressing issues should take into account the elements associated with integrated strategies for peacebuilding and the re-establishment of peace. But it should also take into account those related to conflict prevention.

In order to gain full credibility, the Peacebuilding Commission must not give the appearance of being just another body cut off from reality. The Commission has the advantage that its main area of operations is in the field, where it is called upon to be a catalyst that can mobilize all the necessary elements to ensure the success of its mandate.

Two countries are currently on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission: Burundi and Sierra Leone. Country-specific meetings devoted to those countries began on 13 October 2006. In that regard, concerns arose in connection with the mobilization of financial resources — a matter that has now become a central issue. Moreover, it is clear that there continue to be social and political obstacles, which pose real threats to stability in those two countries.

The high level of youth unemployment and the critical state of social infrastructure in both Burundi and Sierra Leone can lead to popular unrest, which could give rise to unforeseen problems. In addition, the security services do not yet have the necessary means to ensure public order. However, in order to build peace it is clear that we will need to enhance the capacities of those countries, especially their economic and social capacities. We must also help them improve the administration of public resources, combat corruption, ensure respect for human rights, promote good governance and the rule of law and launch and nurture national dialogue.

Economic progress and improved living conditions for the people concerned are therefore essential to the stability we seek. The 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) correctly recalled that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Thus, a situation that may appear to be back to normal can always conceal threats that can emerge if we ignore certain unforeseen elements. The experience in Timor-Leste has been a good lesson for us all in that regard.

It is clear from its first experiences in Burundi and Sierra Leone that the Peacebuilding Commission needs sustained support from the international community. To that end, we will have to put in place strategic options adapted to each situation. Of course, the areas for intervention must be identified in partnership with the Governments concerned and with civil society, while at the same time endeavouring to establish a hierarchy of priorities.

Experience in these first cases should provide a basis for improving the Commission's intervention mechanisms. Success in those cases will make it possible for us more clearly to consider future cases, such as Timor-Leste, Haiti the Democratic Republic of the Congo and others. We should not lose sight of the fact that, to be reliably successful, all peacebuilding efforts should have the support of the relevant national authorities, provided progressively beginning at a specific stage of the undertaking.

The Peacebuilding Fund is certainly not a development fund as such, but it should be able to assist us in finding solutions to various urgent problems in a holistic way. It is therefore important to ensure that the Fund has predictable resources. The appeal made by the Secretary-General at the launching of the Fund — in which he emphasized the vital importance of donor support, without which the objectives of the Peacebuilding Commission will not be achieved — should be repeated today, and that is what we are doing.

The new Commission will of course not replace existing bodies. The principle of complementarity is at the very heart of the interaction between the various bodies of the United Nations system. In order to benefit from that, however, the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should all continue to adapt to ensure that they too achieve a level of effectiveness that meets both their Charter objectives and general expectations. In other words, to use the metaphor of parent and child, the existence of the Peacebuilding Commission should ease the conscience of those who established it, just as parents pass on to their children the dreams and ambitions that they themselves could not realize. The Commission would otherwise be just another body in an insufficiently reformed international institutional framework. Of course, that is not what we want.

We believe that the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission is a promising beginning as regards the reform of the entire United Nations system. In conclusion, we therefore appeal for enhanced coordinated efforts to ensure the continued growth of the Peacebuilding Commission in the spirit of coherence so badly needed by the United Nations system today.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): Slovakia fully aligns itself with the statement that will be delivered shortly by the Permanent Representative of Germany on behalf of the European Union. I shall therefore limit my statement to a few additional comments.

At the outset, Mr. President, I wish to commend your initiative to convene this open debate on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. In our view, this is an important and timely opportunity to explore ways and mechanisms for interaction between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission in order to strengthen the synergy of efforts aimed at helping post-conflict countries to manage the difficult transition from war to peace.

We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission could benefit from more structured interaction with the relevant principal organs of the United Nations. In addition, the Council could benefit from a proactive approach and the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission in dealing with specific post-conflict situations.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established to bridge a critical gap in the peacebuilding architecture. In that respect, the first results of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission demonstrate that the decision to create that new United Nations body was a step in the right direction. At the same time, we must continue to seek its proper place in the system of United Nations institutions, so as to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and to efficiently utilize its unique capabilities and comparative advantages.

The Peacebuilding Commission should continue to develop its mechanisms to better serve as a forum for coordination and exchange of views among major stakeholders, donors and countries with experience in peacebuilding, with a view to defining integrated and tailored country-specific post-conflict strategies. In that regard, we share the belief that, as the Permanent Representative of Italy rightly pointed out, the best

added value will come not from formal reports or decisions, but rather from operational outcomes envisaged in the interaction stimulated by Peacebuilding Commission meetings in the field that bring together all stakeholders and donors. That will be more helpful, in our view, than trying to reach negotiated agreements on formal decisions and reports. The measure of its success should be gauged by fewer numbers of countries relapsing from fragile peace to conflict, and not by a greater number of reports and more paperwork.

In our view, the work of the Peacebuilding Commission will be most effective in the country-specific mode in the field, where its work should be focused. We also believe that the Peacebuilding Commission should be oriented towards seeking practical solutions to complex problems in the area of post-conflict peace consolidation. In that respect, we support the idea of establishing working groups to comprehensively discuss some of the specific aspects of peacebuilding in country-specific meetings, such as the rule of law and other crucial elements of peace consolidation processes. These working groups could bring together different parts of the United Nations that have been involved in the peacebuilding process, major stakeholders and donors.

During its presidency of the Security Council in February, Slovakia will organize an open debate on one important aspect of peacebuilding, and that is security-sector reform. We believe that a more coherent and systematic approach by the international community is needed to address this issue and to secure the proper functioning of security forces and institutions in a post-conflict country. We believe the Commission might play a crucial role in this regard in helping countries to address this problem in a comprehensive manner and could generate long-term support and resources to ensure the coherence and sustainability of the process over the long term.

Last but not least, we believe that in the future the Security Council should make better use of the Peacebuilding Commission as a source of advice on peacebuilding strategies and mandates. Finally, we believe that the number of situations on the Commission's agenda could be gradually expanded to include such countries as Haiti, Timor-Leste or the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An important prerequisite for this would be proper definition of the Commission's role and mechanisms to manage an

increased number of highly complex situations. Here again, we want to underline the importance of country-specific mechanisms in the field as a way to meet this goal.

Based on the concrete proposals and observations we have heard this morning, we believe that today's discussion will generate useful ideas that could help to bring new dynamics to the work of the Commission and strengthen the interaction of the Council with the Commission.

Mr. Miller (United States of America): Mr. President, I appreciate your initiative in scheduling this open discussion of the Peacebuilding Commission.

I will be brief, as I think it is more important that we listen to our guests here today, including the President of the Economic and Social Council, Assistant Secretary-General McAskie, the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission and the chairs of the country-specific meetings of that Commission, the representatives of the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund and particularly the Permanent Representatives of Burundi and Sierra Leone.

I suggest that we look at this debate and the discussion on the Peacebuilding Commission to take place soon in the General Assembly as opportunities to re-energize our common effort to better contribute to concrete results on the ground. No one working in post-conflict situations, no citizen of a country trying to emerge from months or years of fighting cares at all about United Nations lines of authority or the institutional breakdown of seats around the conference room table. They care and we should care — about results. What we all agree on is the goal of strengthening the Commission's ability to make a real difference in strategies to support countries emerging from conflict, to help these societies establish the institutions and systems necessary to prevent a relapse into violence.

From the United States perspective as a member of the Security Council, the goal of the Commission must be to facilitate better coordination between the Council's security component and the broader post-conflict stabilization efforts of the international community. The Commission should provide a forum for the various agencies, Governments and organizations involved in a particular post-conflict situation to come together and share their assessments

and work plans and to better coordinate and target their respective efforts, and for the Council to benefit from their common advice and best recommendations.

The strength of the Peacebuilding Commission will be found through pragmatic, action-oriented and country-specific recommendations to address the problems of post-conflict peacebuilding. The problems encountered by countries emerging from conflict are not solely — and for some, not even mainly — a lack of resources. In any event, this is something for which the Commission will not be able to compensate. Rather, the problems have rather to do with how to ensure that the activities of the national Government and outside partners are well coordinated, that the significant funds available through existing donor mechanisms are best utilized and that the international community's attention to these countries' needs does not fade.

We will take this same practical spirit into the discussions that take place in the General Assembly, in the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission itself and, most importantly, in the Commission's country-specific meetings. We hope others do too.

We appreciate the opportunity today to hear the views of others, both inside this Council and out, on how we can help the Commission better serve our common goal.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): May I join others in congratulating you, Mr. President, for holding this debate and for giving us the opportunity to hear so many valuable contributions in the Chamber today.

It is now seven months since the Peacebuilding Commission was established, and it is appropriate that we in its parent body take stock. In this vein, we, along with others, very much look forward to the debate in the General Assembly next week. We are optimistic about the value the Commission can add. It is a new body and is still feeling its way, but we believe the Commission membership is committed to practical steps to improve peacebuilding across key aspects of the work of the United Nations.

The Commission was created, as many speakers have noted, because there was in a gap in the market. Countries emerging from conflict had no natural home at the United Nations, and several slipped back into conflict when international scrutiny was diverted

elsewhere. This has cost too many lives. So the Commission ensures that countries emerging from conflict remain on our agenda — the joint agenda of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, that these countries benefit from the respective scrutiny we can provide and that they align countries, troop-contributing countries, donors, international financial institutions and other actors in a coordinated set of priorities across the social, security, economic and rule of law areas.

I should like to align myself with the statement to be made soon by Germany on behalf of the European Union and will therefore confine my intervention to concentrating on some core elements of the Commission's work on which we hope we can all focus in the coming months. By the time of the Commission's first anniversary, we should be proud of the positive impact this new body is having on the ground.

First, we believe that the core mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission is its country-specific work with strong national leadership. When the Commission reviews a country, there are six fundamental things we believe it should do.

First, the Commission should take a comprehensive look at peacebuilding to identify the most pressing priorities and make recommendations covering governance, human rights and aid, as well as peace and security. Second, it should involve a wide range of actors, including civil society and the private sector, to agree upon a common vision of how to build peace and promote exchanges of information, coordination and best practice. Third, it should provide scrutiny and honest assessment of progress and problems. Fourth, it should, through frank dialogue with the Government concerned, provide recommendations for action to be followed up on by the Security Council, the international financial institutions, United Nations agencies and other partners. Fifth, it should ensure follow-up to those recommendations through regular progress reviews. Sixth, it should ensure that lessons learned are compiled and disseminated.

The United Kingdom believes that within this framework and with the establishing resolution serving as a foundation, there are three key areas where the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission can develop an effective working relationship. I note

from the important contributions we have heard today that there seems to be a wide measure of agreement on how this partnership might work.

First, the Security Council can use the Peacebuilding Commission for advice. The timing of the request for advice is important — for example, before a mandate renewal, or before the establishment of a new peacekeeping operation. But the nature of the request is also important. The Council could ask for an overview of the situation or advice on a specific issue.

Secondly, the Security Council receives the advice and acts on it appropriately. Sometimes the Council might simply take note of the advice. At others, the advice or recommendation for action will need further evaluation and action by the Council.

Thirdly, the Commission provides early warning to the Council, for instance, drawing the attention of the Security Council to setbacks and risk factors in countries on the Council's agenda.

We see this particular area is one where the Security Council can add value. I am also sure that there is complementarity in the value on the economic and social side that the Economic and Social Council will be able to add.

I want to stress that there is no exclusivity here. We look forward to discussion in other bodies of the United Nations. All contributions are equally valid.

Finally, I cannot mention the development of the Peacebuilding Commission's work without mentioning the Peacebuilding Support Office. I would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for all her efforts so far in bringing this office to life. The Support Office has a number of critical roles. It acts as a secretariat to the Commission, it supports the United Nations country teams in their work with the Commission, and it is a repository for relevant lessons learned so that we can all benefit from best practices.

We hope that by the time of the Commission's first anniversary it will have an important impact on the ground. That means that the peacebuilding priorities identified by the Commission are being implemented in Sierra Leone and Burundi, it means that the United Nations and international actors are being more joined up in support of these priorities, and it means that by July we would hope that the Peacebuilding Commission has an annual calendar of meetings agreed, that there should be well-established

in-country consultation mechanisms with national Governments taking the leading role, and that the Peacebuilding Support Office should be working at full strength. With the help of all the colleagues on the Peacebuilding Commission, we believe that we can reach these goals.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): We thank the delegation of the Russian Federation for organizing this important meeting on post-conflict peacebuilding. My delegation is pleased that the Security Council extended an invitation to the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council, the President of the Peacebuilding Commission and other important actors that are participating in this debate today. We also appreciate the fact that the Security Council has opened this meeting to other States Members of the United Nations as a way of demonstrating that peacebuilding is a responsibility for all.

Last year, both the General Assembly and the Security Council established the Peacebuilding Commission. Now that the Commission is soon to be a year old, it is time for each organ — the General Assembly and the Security Council — according to its respective mandate, to reflect further on the purpose and mission of the Peacebuilding Commission.

At present, my delegation is concerned that the Commission means different things to different people. To quote briefly the ambassador of Angola and Chair of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission,

“Let us all agree that our theoretical differences in New York are meaningless to those who are directly suffering from the consequences of conflict on the ground. What matters for them are concrete actions and not just eloquent statements.”

For example, it is easier to explain that the Peacebuilding Commission is not a donor agency, since it cannot have the resources of the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank or even the International Monetary Fund. Also, the Commission cannot simply meet in New York to discuss far-away countries that are struggling to emerge from conflict. What the Peacebuilding Commission is, and should be, is more complicated and difficult to explain.

According to the founding resolutions passed by both the Security Council and the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission has three main purposes. The first is to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery. Its second purpose is to focus attention on the reconstruction and institution-building efforts necessary for recovery from conflict and to support the development of integrated strategies in order to lay the foundation for sustainable development. The third purpose is to provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and without the United Nations, to develop best practices, to help to ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities and to extend the period of attention given by the international community to post-conflict recovery.

Certainly, the aims and purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission are phrased in language that is vague. What is clear, however, is that the Commission has to make its impact on the ground, which means that it needs to embrace strategies for post-conflict recovery that enjoy the confidence of the countries concerned. Without country ownership, the Commission is likely to be regarded as a structure that imposes solutions that may be unacceptable to the countries that are supposed to benefit from its expertise and advice.

The Peacebuilding Commission has to be knowledgeable about the actors on the ground that are promoting post-conflict recovery, since it is in the best position to enhance coordination and cooperation among various stakeholders. The Commission can bring together the United Nations agencies, the donors, civil society and the Governments in a common purpose of building peace and thereby fill the gap that is always present when various organizations and agencies are trying their best to achieve the same goal from different perspectives and mandates. In this way, the Commission may be able to identify a niche for itself.

We welcome the recognition by the Security Council of the link between peace and development, which is reflected in the integrated approach to peacekeeping. In response, the civilian components of peacekeeping operations are structured under a development pillar and a security pillar. Peacekeeping is an integral part of peacebuilding, and therefore it is

important that peacekeeping operations create an enabling environment for those involved in peacebuilding efforts, including the promotion of human rights, so that their efforts could be integrated from the point of the deployment of a mission. This integrated manner is already reflected in the Council mandates for recent complex missions such as the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, and others.

The Security Council could seek advice from the Peacebuilding Commission before peacekeeping operations are deployed and after the Council has decided on mandates, so as to ensure greater cohesion between the United Nations peacekeeping operations and other actors involved in peacebuilding. Before scaling down the activities of peacekeeping operations in a country emerging from conflict, the Security Council could also consult with the Commission, so that the transition is smooth and everything is in place when the peacekeepers leave.

The holding of elections has often been considered as a benchmark for declaring that a country has emerged from conflict and is ready for the next stage of peacebuilding. Yet there have been occasions when the donors, including the Bretton Woods institutions, have needed more assurance beyond the holding of elections, no matter how free and fair those elections may be. I pause here again to quote the President of the Economic and Social Council, who put it much better in his statement by calling this tactic "a wait-and-see approach". While the holding of elections is an important indicator of future stability, it may not indicate that a country emerging from conflict is beyond a relapse to its past.

A more comprehensive indicator of stability may be a combination of the holding of democratic elections, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), reconstruction and security sector reform. Yet in some countries emerging from conflict, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme have been slow in funding or implementing DDR activities because of large unpaid debts owed to them — usually by the previous regime or Government. The Peacebuilding Commission could provide a forum through which problems relating to the

slow pace of funding peacebuilding activities could be resolved quickly.

The quick injection of resources into a country emerging from conflict is often the glue that keeps that country from falling apart once again. Here, I would like to refer to the statement made earlier by the Representative of Sierra Leone, who said simply that the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission reflects a sense of urgency. For that reason, we believe that the donor community needs to be flexible and to remain engaged, particularly in the early post-conflict stages.

The Peacebuilding Fund was created for the specific purpose of assisting in the facilitation of peacebuilding activities. The Fund was understood to be a catalyst for attracting much-needed resources — particularly at a time when there may be little hope of success towards recovery. It is for that reason that we hope that the role of the Peacebuilding Fund will be clearly defined. It would be unfortunate if, because of the Peacebuilding Fund, the Peacebuilding Commission were to be mistaken for a donor agency.

Finally, there are fundamental practices that the Commission should follow if it is to become successful. One of these is ensuring that countries emerging from conflict have full ownership of the building of the peace for the benefit of their people. Another is to make certain that the Peacebuilding Commission develops rules of procedure that are permanent and predictable. It should be clear to everyone what the Commission is about and what it can and cannot do. Lastly, the Peacebuilding Commission will soon be requested to consider taking on other countries, beyond Sierra Leone and Burundi. We hope that such requests will be considered in the light of the experience gained in assisting the first two countries on the Commission's agenda.

The Peacebuilding Commission is very important for the lives of people in countries that are emerging from conflict. It needs to be a beacon of hope and promise. Its impact must be felt on the ground. In other words, the Commission should soon meet in Freetown or Bujumbura. New York meetings alone are not going to make a great difference in the lives of people in Freetown and Bujumbura, who are supposed to be the beneficiaries of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): At the outset, I, too, would like to commend the delegation of the Russian Federation for having organized this debate,

which affords us the opportunity to highlight the importance and review the performance of the Peacebuilding Commission. In this regard, we are grateful to the various officials and the representatives of Sierra Leone and Burundi for their briefings and statements.

I associate myself with the statement to be made later by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We all clearly have a stake in the Peacebuilding Commission, whose creation is but one important step in the implementation of the institutional reforms needed to enable the United Nations to respond to the needs identified in the 2005 World Summit Outcome for an institutional, systematic and seamless connection between peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding. Only an effective Peacebuilding Commission can ensure that the huge investments made by the international community in peace and stability in those volatile parts of the world will achieve the most positive, sustainable and irreversible outcomes.

The success of the Commission will certainly bring encouragement and hope to millions of people — especially those in Africa — caught in the vicious cycle of conflict and poverty. We are very pleased, therefore, that the Organizational Committee held meetings during which Burundi and Sierra Leone were selected as pioneers in post-conflict peacebuilding under the auspices of the Peacebuilding Commission. They deserve all the support they can get in their recovery efforts because, as pilot projects, their success will impact on the future of the Commission.

The danger of relapse is all too real and ever-present in societies that are still emerging from conflict. In a climate of high expectations and lurking distrust, the transition from peacekeeping to post-conflict recovery poses enormous institutional challenges that can easily overwhelm any Government. Above all, we must understand that as long as the underlying causes of conflict remain unaddressed, we could be on shaky ground.

In our view, therefore, the most important role of the Peacebuilding Commission will be to identify, to prioritize and to target its limited resources with a view to addressing those fundamental problems. In this way, the Commission can be a worthy partner and help national Governments to adopt the best practices in governance that are so critical to long-term

reconciliation and stability and ensure a seamless transition from conflict to the promotion of sustainable peace and development.

As a member of the Organizational Committee, Ghana recognizes that the Peacebuilding Commission, like any new body or agency, will have teething problems. However, we are of the considered view that we need to agree early on our *modus operandi*. In this regard, we should avoid creating unnecessary bureaucratic layers and procedures and focus more on the delivery or implementation of agreed national strategies. As has been evident from some of the statements made today — especially the passionate appeal by the representative of Sierra Leone — we should strive to reduce the time lag between approval and disbursement of resources.

Previous speakers have rightly highlighted the organic relationship that must exist between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission and, by extension, the other organs of the United Nations, especially the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. It cannot be otherwise, because of the inextricable link between peace, security and development. Indeed, the Peacebuilding Commission offers a unique opportunity to test the efficacy of the growing preference for an integrated approach to United Nations missions and, probably, to point the way towards improved foreign aid management.

Since the Peacebuilding Commission is not a donor agency, we should all participate in decisions relating to the disbursement of its resources. Everything must be done to avoid the known pitfalls of donor practices, which have been criticized for duplication of effort, politicization and lack of local ownership, as well as for high administrative costs.

The Commission is expected to take a broad approach in its work and to bring together all relevant actors in order to serve as a forum for dialogue and cooperation between national actors and the international community. It is therefore well placed to blaze a new trail in international cooperation by drawing on the knowledge, expertise and experience accumulated by the United Nations, donor agencies, international financial institutions, women, non-governmental organizations and civil society over the years so as to develop programmes that can effectively

address the often complex and interrelated problems which are peculiar to each post-conflict situation.

It is precisely because each conflict is *sui generis* that we think the Peacebuilding Commission should be encouraged to have technical meetings in the countries concerned with a view to better appreciating and understanding the internal or local situation.

The Peacebuilding Commission, as it develops, should also pay due attention to the regional and subregional dimensions of peacebuilding, seeking to reinforce regional organizations in their peacebuilding efforts and to utilize their expertise.

It is also our candid view that, as a newly created body, the Commission has an ideal opportunity to incorporate a gender dimension into its mandate and its work from the start. In consonance with resolution 1325 (2000), the Peacebuilding Commission should seek to involve women in all aspects of the peacebuilding process.

While we share the view that the Peacebuilding Commission cannot be expected to assume the responsibilities of an elected Government, we also believe that the nature of its operations requires an appreciable level of involvement in order to win the confidence and trust of its clients. After all, it is expected to play the role of a coordinating body that leverages national and international resources. The presence of the Commission must be felt throughout the receiving State, as the traumatized population needs to be assured that the international community remains fully engaged in finding solutions to their problems.

Needless to say, in order to meet the challenges of effective peacebuilding, the Peacebuilding Commission needs adequate resources. We doubt whether the quantum of money so far pledged, although commendable, is commensurate with the tasks and urgent needs in post-conflict countries.

Finally, we recognize that the Peacebuilding Commission can only facilitate peace; it cannot build it. Although adequate financial resources are crucial to successful peacebuilding, it is the will and determination of the Governments and the peoples concerned to preserve the peace and change the course of their own history that ultimately constitute the most decisive factor and the best guarantee of sustainable peace and development.

Mr. Kleib (Indonesia): We are grateful to you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting on post-conflict peacebuilding. Indonesia associates itself with the statement to be made shortly by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Peacebuilding Commission is truly a unique platform, in that it serves to bridge the current critical gap in the international post-conflict peacebuilding system. Although the Commission is still in its early stages, we recognize that the expectations are high. It is therefore the view of my delegation that this public debate should be intended as a forum for the exchange of views among the stakeholders in order to explore practical ways of strengthening the Commission and enabling it to perform its work in an effective and efficient manner.

Enhanced interaction and complementarity among various United Nations organs aimed at supporting the work of the Peacebuilding Commission would be beneficial. In that context, we look forward to the expected debate on the Commission in the General Assembly, which will provide important input on how to better assist the Commission in its tasks.

While the Peacebuilding Commission is expected to contribute to the advancement of global peace and stability, we are of the view that it can have a particular impact in its role as a coordinating body that leverages international and national expertise. An inclusive and well-coordinated approach would systematically synergize peacebuilding efforts at both the national and international levels.

It is our opinion that the work of the Commission would be more results-oriented if integrated peacebuilding strategies fully reflect the priorities of the countries concerned. Each integrated strategy needs to be broken down into manageable phases laying out a credible set of tasks and identifying the actors concerned. It should have a degree of flexibility in order to adapt to changes on the ground.

The priorities have to come from national Governments, and ownership of the post-conflict recovery process is paramount. We feel that a better coordinated, more coherent and well organized international support system, provided through the Peacebuilding Commission, would facilitate better access and response for the countries in need. Here, we would like to underline that the work of the

Commission should not create a separate layer of complexity for existing processes and that the Commission should not try to micromanage the activities being carried out in the countries concerned.

We must be careful, however, not to end up creating a donor-recipient culture in the Peacebuilding Commission. Due care must be exercised so that the donors to the Commission are not perceived as controlling it, because that would only draw unnecessary criticism towards the United Nations.

My delegation takes note that the resolutions establishing the Peacebuilding Commission do not clearly provide modalities for the involvement of regional and subregional actors. We therefore feel that there is also a need to provide practical tools and guidance for engaging regional and subregional actors in country-specific configurations.

The positive role of the relevant stakeholders is crucial to a successful transition from the post-conflict phase to the normal process of sustainable peace and development. Hence, we are pleased to see the participation of various important entities in this discussion. Their contribution is useful, not only because they provide the Council with additional ideas on how to support the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, but also because the work that they do on the ground for people ravaged by conflict is indeed very valuable and much appreciated.

My delegation is also of the view that civil society and non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations, as well as the private sector, should play constructive roles in post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction. In the light of that, we would like to underline the need to formulate a modality enabling them to participate actively in peacebuilding activities.

We are particularly encouraged by the most recent country meetings on Burundi and Sierra Leone, which were more action-oriented. We look forward to the presentation in the near future of the work plans on both countries by the respective Chairs of those country meetings. The progress made on key elements contained in the Chairs' summaries needs to be evaluated through more frequent meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Finally, my delegation would like to state that we need to strike a balance between the work of the

Organizational Committee and the country-specific configurations, as success in one aids the other. A properly empowered and robust Committee would serve to strengthen the work of the Commission.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting. We would also like to thank the representatives of the relevant bodies of the United Nations system, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, for their participation in today's debate.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established as an outcome of the 2005 World Summit. For the first time in its history, the United Nations has a mechanism to coordinate and address post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. Despite the remarkable results achieved over the past 60 years by United Nations Blue Helmets operations in putting an end to armed conflicts, the United Nations faces a great many challenges in building sustainable peace. We hope that the Commission's establishment will herald better times for post-conflict countries and their peoples and that it will enable them to realize their dreams of peace and development at an early date.

The healthy development of the Peacebuilding Commission, a newborn baby in the United Nations family, will depend on the joint efforts of all Member States; it is also the joint responsibility of everyone. Peacebuilding in any post-conflict country is, by its very nature, a comprehensive and systematic undertaking and requires that each of the parties concerned fully play its role.

First, countries under consideration at the country-specific meetings must enjoy full ownership, which is a prerequisite for successful peacebuilding. One of the Commission's main functions is to provide advice for peacebuilding in post-conflict countries and to help those countries to formulate integrated strategies. In a sense, the countries under consideration are the Commission's clients. It is only by communicating with them as much as possible and by gaining a better understanding of their needs that the Commission can establish clear objectives for its work and develop country strategies that are appropriate to their specific situations.

Secondly, the Commission's function in comprehensive coordination must be enhanced. That is

the key to successful peacebuilding. Coordination should be carried out at the following three levels.

The first is coordination among the different plans for reconstruction in post-conflict countries. Before the Peacebuilding Commission entered the scene, a number of plans for reconstruction and framework documents may have already existed. The Commission should consolidate them into an integrated strategy and programme of action.

The second level of coordination is that among different players. Peacebuilding is a complex undertaking, with a host of players, including donors, countries that by tradition are influential, international financial institutions, civil society and so forth. The Commission needs to establish and maintain channels for smooth communication among the players.

The third level of coordination is that among different organs of the United Nations. The General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council all play an important role in peacebuilding, according to their respective mandates. The relationship between them should be complementary rather than competitive and should enable them to capitalize on their respective comparative advantages. Thirdly, the focus of the Peacebuilding Commission should be country-specific meetings so that integrated strategies and programmes of action can be formulated promptly for countries under consideration, because they constitute the very soul of peacebuilding.

Having finished drafting the guidelines for its work in the initial phase, the Peacebuilding Commission should shift its focus to country-specific meetings in a timely manner. Its work should be practical, efficient, focused and action-oriented, with a view to developing integrated strategies and programmes of action that affect the specific situations of the countries under consideration. The Commission should try not to be over-ambitious and should concentrate its limited energy on solid, down-to-earth work. Only by branding and building up prestige at the outset can it attract more attention from the international community.

Fourthly, the role of the Support Office should be brought into full play so as to provide guarantees and support for the effective functioning of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Support Office should not only serve as a secretariat by preparing for

meetings and providing conference services, but it should also actively make bold proposals to the Commission in the fields of policy, theory and strategy by taking advantage of its wide access to a great variety of information and its extensive contacts, thereby playing the role of a good adviser.

The international community, and developing countries in particular, have high expectations of the Peacebuilding Commission. This June we will celebrate the first birthday of this newborn baby. We hope that with the joint efforts of all, the Peacebuilding Commission will be able to give us a report card that pleases everyone. This will be the best birthday present it can give to itself. China is ready to join the international community in working hard towards this end.

The President (spoke in Russian): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

The issue of post-conflict peacebuilding has never been more topical in the context of United Nations activities, in particular those of the Security Council. Experience shows that achieving lasting peace and the effective resolution of armed conflicts is possible only on the basis of a comprehensive approach. This approach must include preventive and peacekeeping efforts, along with peacebuilding measures for post-conflict reconstruction, and ensure continuity and consistency during the transition from one phase to the next. Such an approach will allow us to create firm guarantees of regional stability and the non-renewal of conflict.

An important tangible result of the decisions taken at the 2005 summit was the joint establishment by the General Assembly and the Security Council of the Peacebuilding Commission. This body, as this morning's discussion has shown has considerable practical potential and could become one of the important mechanisms of international support for the reconstruction of States that have experienced armed conflicts.

In general, the Commission's work on Burundi and Sierra Leone in its first six months of existence is to be commended. We note the efforts of the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Commission — the Permanent Representative of Angola, Mr. Gaspar Martins, and his two country coordinators, the Permanent Representatives of Norway, Mr. Løvold, and

of the Netherlands, Mr. Majoor. We must also note the considerable work done by the Peacebuilding Support Office, headed by the Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. McAskie.

However, there were not just successes during this period. We suggest that the well-known difficulties are largely due to the complexity of this initial stage in setting up a commission. In its activities, particular attention should be given in the future to ensuring close coordination with the recipient countries. In this context, we welcome the participation in today's meeting of representatives of Burundi and Sierra Leone and the confirmation of their readiness to cooperate with the Peacebuilding Commission.

It is important that members of the Commission conduct an impartial and collective analysis of priorities for peacebuilding in countries on their agenda, and that they develop agreed recommendations that provide assistance required both by recipient States and by the Security Council. If proper account is taken of recommendations developed together with Governments of recipient countries by the Commission, the General Assembly, the Security Council, United Nations agencies, the donor community, the international financial institutions and other interested parties, this will improve the coordination of international post-conflict support and reduce the risk of a relapse into a crisis.

Particular attention must be given to enhancing cooperation between the Commission and the Security Council, particularly at this stage when Burundi and Sierra Leone are on the agenda of both bodies. It is important to establish a timely exchange of information and show a clear division of labour. Of course, this must be done while at the same time developing links between the Peacebuilding Commission, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

There is a clear need for more systematic work by the Commission and more careful preparation of its country-specific meetings in order to increase their effectiveness. It is important to have a sensible mix of closed meetings and open, informal consultations within the Commission and the work of the expert groups on specific questions of Burundi and Sierra Leone.

The most important component of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission is its work on the ground with national Governments and involving the United

Nations country teams and the donor community. Here, additional attention must be given to harmonizing the activities of the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Commission with existing coordinating mechanisms, first and foremost within the United Nations system itself. What is needed is cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and United Nations agencies in the field that does not infringe upon existing United Nations operational activities but rather enhances them, including by taking account of the existence of specific cooperation programmes with recipient countries that have been endorsed by the executive boards of those United Nations agencies.

The General Assembly, in our view, is precisely that forum where Member States can find an answer to this question. We welcome the initiative of the Non-Aligned Movement to hold a plenary meeting of the Assembly to discuss the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. We suggest that the interest shown in the Commission by the two main United Nations bodies is a guarantee of the close and constructive cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council to achieve our common goal — that is, to increase the effectiveness of international efforts in the area of peacebuilding.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Matussek (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Serbia, and the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

The European Union would like to thank the Russian Federation, as presidency of the Security Council, for organizing this very timely debate on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission following the first two rounds of country-specific meetings.

The European Union sees the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission as a key achievement of the United Nations reform process. Together with the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund, it forms the core of the United Nations new

peacebuilding architecture. As a flexible instrument, the Peacebuilding Commission is "learning by doing". In our view, members should be willing to work creatively within the given framework.

From its inception, the European Union has supported the concept of the Commission as a body that will ensure an integrated approach to peacebuilding, taking into account the links between security, development, human rights and the rule of law. That very much corresponds to the European Union's comprehensive approach to conflict prevention, development and peacebuilding. Over the years, the European Union has developed and used an array of instruments. They include political and development-related tools, as well as conflict prevention and crisis management mechanisms.

The European Union, the States members of the European Union and the European Community engage in peacebuilding activities worldwide — in Africa and Asia, as well as in the Middle East, Europe, Central Asia and Latin America. European member States and the European Community fund and implement projects in all areas of peacebuilding. A few such important areas include demobilization and reintegration, security sector reform, good governance, reconciliation efforts, child- and gender-related post-conflict assistance, trade-related measures and reconstruction operations. The European Union is committed to actively supporting the work of the Peacebuilding Commission on the basis of its experience, resources and worldwide operability.

The Peacebuilding Commission has got off to a good start. After only two sets of country-specific meetings, it has identified areas of priority action for the two countries under consideration. The Commission has also established a dialogue among Governments concerned, the United Nations system, institutional donors, regional actors and members of the Peacebuilding Commission. Now, the recommendations of the Commission must be implemented in the countries concerned and within the institutional framework of the United Nations. Here, the Commission also needs the support of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and dialogue must be broadened in the countries concerned to include national civil society, the private sector and other relevant parties.

One year after its establishment, the Commission will also have to make decisions as to its strategic goals. If the Commission is to add value to peacebuilding efforts worldwide, and particularly in the countries themselves, it will have to be ambitious. It will have to be more than the tools we already have, more than a mere coordination mechanism, and more than a donors' conference. Promoting the development of a viable peacebuilding strategy that has broad ownership is where the Peacebuilding Commission can really add value.

The European Union would like to contribute to the discussion among the Commission's members on structuring the future work of the Commission and its interaction with other actors. In doing so, we would draw on our own experience in coordinating European Union programmes, as well as on the experience of the first country-specific meetings.

The Commission has defined general areas of priority for each country under consideration. It will now be useful to further prioritize within those areas, in consultation with the countries concerned, United Nations country teams, donors, civil society and the private sector.

Defining priorities necessarily means making a selection among a huge number of possible areas of engagement. The Peacebuilding Commission should focus on areas that have a direct and traceable link to the causes of conflict, areas in which instruments of so-called classical development are not available or functional, and areas where coordination and integration are especially needed. All peacebuilding initiatives in the field should be linked to existing strategies and programmes to avoid duplication of efforts.

We want the Commission to be able to work coherently, continuously and in a result-oriented way. To achieve that, the Commission should focus on activities in the field. It should enhance cooperation with all relevant actors, including donors and non-State actors. It should make use of regular informal meetings in between formal meetings and find a way to capture and condense lessons learned from its work.

The Security Council has started to discuss its relation to the Peacebuilding Commission, how to intensify communication between the Council and the Commission, and how best to achieve implementation of advice from the Commission. A similar dialogue is

getting under way between the Commission and the General Assembly with the upcoming open debate in that organ. The European Union welcomes those efforts and also recognizes the contribution that the Economic and Social Council can make.

There are many ways to enhance cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Regular meetings between the Commission chairs and the presidents of those bodies would be one possibility. Invitations to the chairs and the chairs of country-specific meetings to brief those bodies would be another.

The European Union remains committed to working on integrated peacebuilding strategies with the Peacebuilding Commission and with the countries concerned. We are determined to make that key project of United Nations reform a success and to make its impact felt positively in the regions where the Peacebuilding Commission is engaged.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Jamaica.

Mr. Wolfe (Jamaica): First, let me congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January and for the excellent work that you and your delegation have accomplished during that period.

As coordinator of the caucus of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the Peacebuilding Commission, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Movement regarding the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission.

There can be no denying that, in the recent past, the United Nations has seen a surge in the requirements for peacekeeping operations around the world. The role of those operations has become more complex and demanding, placing a huge responsibility on the United Nations, and as a consequence has led to a tremendous strain on existing resources. We recall that it was in response to that development that the concept of a Peacebuilding Commission was introduced in December 2004 as a result of a high-level United Nations report. It subsequently gained momentum in March 2005 when then Secretary-General Kofi Annan released his report entitled "In larger freedom".

In due deference to and respect for the prerogatives of the Security Council and the role of the

presidency in advancing initiatives relating to international peace and security, the Non-Aligned Movement is concerned that the Security Council should at this stage find it necessary to review the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. While it is no secret that the Commission has experienced some difficulties with its internal operations and processes, we think that it is both lacking in merit and premature to have the Security Council review or evaluate its activities at this juncture, in particular in the light of the stipulation by General Assembly resolution 60/180 that the Peacebuilding Commission shall submit an annual report to the General Assembly, which shall hold an annual debate to review it.

Since its establishment by General Assembly resolution 60/180 — which also established its *modus operandi*, among other working parameters — the Commission has met four times on matters concerning its core functions. The Commission has examined the situations in Burundi and Sierra Leone, and has approved the disbursement of much-needed finances to support crucial areas identified by key stakeholders and the Governments of both countries. The key areas are those pinpointed as most likely to lead to a relapse into conflict.

The Non-Aligned Movement places significant value on the Peacebuilding Commission, in particular its role in support of national ownership of post-conflict peacebuilding priority planning and initiatives. Notwithstanding the fact that the Commission is still in its formative stages and still going through the expected teething processes, it has worked as closely as possible, under the circumstances, with national authorities to ensure national ownership of the peacebuilding process. There is concurrence, and indeed broad consensus, within the Commission that economic reconstruction and rehabilitation and a comprehensive set of risk-reduction strategies should be at the forefront of all efforts aimed at sustaining peace, initiating development and promoting post-conflict recovery.

The Non-Aligned Movement emphasizes that due respect and regard must be shown for the role of the Organizational Committee in the preparation of country-specific meetings and in evaluating the progress made and charting the way forward after each country-specific meeting, based on the summaries of the meetings prepared by the respective Chairpersons,

in addition to the full participation of the countries under consideration in the decision-making process.

It is also useful to remind ourselves that the Peacebuilding Commission is not a donor agency, as its activities are carried out in a far broader and more comprehensive and participatory context, consistent with its mandate. Decisions regarding the provision of financial resources should therefore be guided by national priorities and be based on the collective decision of members of the Peacebuilding Commission. Recommendations for assistance must highlight the priority areas established by the Government of the country under review by the Commission. The matter of Government guidance should also be uppermost in planning the way forward, and will certainly serve to strengthen the process of national ownership. The holistic and inclusive approach to evaluation and recommendations adopted at country-specific meetings can only add to the integrity of the process within the Commission.

The Non-Aligned Movement would also further like to reiterate that the Peacebuilding Commission's involvement in reconstruction efforts is based clearly on General Assembly resolution 60/180, which stipulates the need for a dedicated mechanism to address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards recovery, reintegration and reconstruction, and to assist them in laying the foundation for sustainable development.

Despite the seemingly clear channels for the Peacebuilding Commission to work towards achieving its objectives, the Non-Aligned Movement is of course concerned at certain shortcomings that, if not addressed, could have the unwanted effects of stifling its work or threatening to undermine its capability and effectiveness. The Movement would therefore like to see an increase in the frequency of meetings of the Organizational Committee to assess and evaluate strategies, attend to reconstruction and institution-building efforts and work towards developing recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, among other things.

Additionally, the Peacebuilding Commission must identify the means by which funds that are approved for disbursement reach recipient countries in the shortest possible time. It is not sufficient to identify the urgency of the need while paying scant regard to,

or becoming lax in, follow-up actions at the most crucial stage.

It is necessary to strengthen the role and the work of the Organizational Committee as the entity governing the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. In that regard, the Commission is the body responsible and entitled to elaborate on the guidelines regarding meetings in the country-specific format, as well as the work of the Peacebuilding Support Office. We would therefore call on all to avoid any action that could be construed as undermining the authority of the Organizational Committee.

Looking ahead, the Non-Aligned Movement is convinced that the upcoming debate in the General Assembly will undoubtedly enrich the awareness of the general membership as to the progress being made within the Peacebuilding Commission, notably in addressing the outstanding organizational and substantive issues. That debate will of course add value to the open debate now taking place in the Security Council, and will not only increase the momentum of the follow-up to the multi-dimensional aspects of the cases under consideration within the Commission but will also enhance its effectiveness, in line with the respective prerogatives and responsibilities of both organs.

The caucus of the Non-Aligned Movement in the Peacebuilding Commission would like to take this opportunity to express its appreciation to the Ambassador of Angola, Chairperson of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as to the Chairpersons of the country-specific meetings and the Peacebuilding Support Office, for the successful outcome of the country-specific meetings held to date. The Movement would also like to encourage the wider membership of the Peacebuilding Commission to remain unrelenting and vigilant in efforts to consolidate the gains and achievements made to date, so as to mitigate the possibility of countries under consideration relapsing into conflict.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to associate myself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the member countries of the Non-Aligned Movement members of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Peacebuilding Commission is currently in the process of establishing its identity in order to put its imprint on its efforts, in line with the mandates conferred upon it by the resolutions that established it.

We believe that the central matter as regards the Commission's future is the issue of its relevance. Since it is not a new donor entity — notwithstanding the importance of the Peacebuilding Fund — it is essential that the Commission be given the leadership role in mobilizing and coordinating resources and efforts in support of countries emerging from conflict. The Peacebuilding Commission must not become a body for academic debates. It should instead be in the field providing advice and working with countries emerging from conflict.

To that end, it is essential to strengthen ties with international financing institutions, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and regional banks, as well as with the community of donor countries. We welcome the efforts made in that regard. Likewise, we believe it is necessary to adopt the necessary measures to ensure the broadest possible participation by all relevant actors in the search for solutions to the most pressing problems encountered by countries emerging from conflict, including participation by civil society.

In the future it will be necessary to strengthen the role and work of the Organizational Committee as the managerial body of the Commission — in particular its country-specific format, which is key.

We believe it is urgent to avoid competing visions that could weaken the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. This requires action agreed between the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as proper coordination with the Economic and Social Council.

With a view to strengthening the work of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, we believe it is necessary to establish an annual calendar of formal meetings, leaving the necessary flexibility to carry out informal meetings

whenever necessary, either in a country-specific format or another format.

We observe with concern the persistence of discussion on how to carry out the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. National ownership in determining and carrying out national priorities is, of course, a basic premise in this respect. National priorities are identified as a result of an internal process of consultation carried out by the national Government, with participation of various national actors. But in our opinion, defining national priorities is a two-way street, and the Peacebuilding Commission cannot be excluded. One of the main purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission, according to resolution 1645 (2005) is "To bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery" (*para. 2 (a)*).

We are pleased that in the months since its work began, the Peacebuilding Commission has addressed the cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone. During this period, specific plans of action were reviewed for both countries, with the active participation of the national authorities of those countries; the contribution of the Peacebuilding Support Office in approving the disbursement of significant assistance for both countries was valuable. This year we should follow up on the status of the implementation of the agreed programmes. It will also be necessary for all of us to make efforts to replenish the resources of the Peacebuilding Fund.

Lastly, beyond the required reports mandated by the resolutions, we feel that at this stage the most important thing is for the Peacebuilding Commission to make active cooperation with countries emerging from conflict a priority.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. As announced at the outset of the meeting, I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3.30 p.m. sharp.

The meeting was suspended at 12.55 p.m.



Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5627th meeting

Wednesday, 31 January 2007, 3.30 p.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Shcherbak	(Russian Federation)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Cheng Hong
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. Deruffe
	Ghana	Mr. Yankey
	Indonesia	Mr. Budiman
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Ruiz Rosas
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Henzab
	Slovakia	Mr. Mlynár
	South Africa	Ms. Qwabe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . .	Ms. Moir
	United States of America	Mr. Miller

Agenda

Post-conflict peacebuilding

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting resumed at 3.35 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I wish to remind all speakers, as I indicated at the morning's session, to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

Mrs. Gallardo Hernández (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, my delegation welcomes your initiative to hold this open debate on peacebuilding. Countries such as El Salvador that have passed from a culture of violence to a culture of peace are committed to defining and implementing national strategies that will make it possible for us to move forward to sustainable social peace.

This month, my country is commemorating 15 years since the signing of the peace agreements. On 16 January 1992, we began a new historic stage, one ripe with achievements, but also, we have to recognize, one bringing challenges and new threats. We have a story to tell, and that is our reason for wanting to be part of the Peacebuilding Commission. The United Nations system has accumulated a great deal of experience and developed important strategies on the ground, which can now be formalized through the Peacebuilding Commission.

The mandate entrusted to El Salvador as a Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission can be found in the wording of Security Council resolution 1645 (2005) and of General Assembly resolution 60/180, which state that "countries that have experienced recent post-conflict recovery would make valuable contributions to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission ...". Those resolutions also refer to the primary functions of the Commission, namely, to provide advice, to develop integrated strategies related to the processes of peacebuilding, to integrate best practices, among others.

Formalizing lessons learned on the ground, we believe, will help in the development of global strategies in the future. We must recognize that those countries which can share their post-conflict experiences have certainly shown a courageous national will to meld the efforts of a number of actors from the political, military and humanitarian spheres, as well as from the area of sustainable development. That achievement should be recognized and shared.

Measures that allow countries with post-conflict experience to participate actively in the work of the Commission will benefit all of the members of the Commission, since lessons learned are a source of inspiration for formulating comprehensive strategies and providing advice on the ground today in Burundi and in Sierra Leone.

We welcome the decision taken by the members of the Commission to set up a working group on lessons learned. The group will meet in an open manner and will benefit from the participation of national actors and representatives of civil society, as well as key United Nations actors. The dialogue will focus on the priorities established so far for Burundi and Sierra Leone.

The purpose of the process is to enrich the discussions and the work the Commission in general and, in particular, to strengthen strategies for the benefit of those countries under consideration. The systematization of lessons learned should also be translated into action on the ground, and should lead to a greater interplay among initiatives relating to, inter alia, reform of the justice and security sectors, youth employment, the empowerment of women, governance and institutional capacity, as well as promoting respect for human rights.

As I said, the work of the group of countries interested in lessons learned will be making a contribution in Sierra Leone and Burundi. Its members will share their thoughts and recommendations with civil society organizations and national academic institutions from both countries.

El Salvador reaffirms its commitment to contributing, on the basis of its own experience, to the enrichment of the conceptualization and implementation of a comprehensive peacebuilding process. Putting an end to violence necessarily requires national will and a suitable regional and international environment. It also requires shared determination by the various actors with a view to dealing with the structural causes of the conflict.

While certain aspects of the peacebuilding process will respond to the specific causes of the conflict, we must bear in mind that there are certain factors common to all post-conflict situations. The peace processes in Burundi and Sierra Leone have particular resonance in a number of countries members

of the Commission, in particular countries that have themselves been through post-conflict situations.

The impact of El Salvador's own peacebuilding experience leads us to affirm that, while resources for, *inter alia*, initiating national development strategies and ensuring human security, including through implementing security policies, are important, we must not forget to heed the intangible aspects of social peace: educating for peace, promoting tolerance and citizens' confidence in new institutions and teaching respect for the rule of law, as well as encouraging the participation of civil society and the private sector in new national development projects.

The participation of women in the post-conflict decision-making process is also essential. Similarly, young people must have new opportunities for employment and recreation so that they do not themselves become elements that threaten social peace.

In conclusion, El Salvador would like to repay the international community and the United Nations by actively participating in the Peacebuilding Commission. We express our gratitude for the very valuable assistance that we received when we needed it most.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to the representative of Senegal.

Mr. Seek (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): By holding a debate on the subject of post-conflict peacebuilding, the Security Council is tackling an issue of fundamental importance for regional and international stability and security — an issue that requires sustained special attention.

The establishment, on 20 December 2005, of the Peacebuilding Commission in an effort to increase the focus of the international community on countries emerging from conflict represents a decisive milestone in the reform process towards enabling the United Nations to meet the challenges of the new millennium. Post-conflict countries are like recovering patients who need to be closely monitored to ensure that they do not suffer a potentially fatal relapse.

In order to support such countries as they work to restore peace and stability and to help them to avoid relapsing into violence, we need to help them to put a definitive end to the root causes of such conflicts, which are essentially related to the transfer of power, problems of governance and social factors. That is why it is essential to support post-conflict countries in order

to strengthen their institutional and administrative capacities and help them to establish mechanisms to develop democratic governance, to reform their justice and security sectors and to restore their economies.

Similarly, the space for dialogue needs to be established and strengthened through the significant involvement of women and young people, who are the primary victims of conflict. The involvement of women and young people is particularly desirable because they generally constitute the majority of the populations of such countries and are necessary conveyors of information and opinion. For that reason, Senegal calls on all Member States to continue their efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security. Six years after its adoption, that resolution, which has led to major progress, must continue to be supported by the international community.

Building peace also requires the establishment of programmes aimed at reintegrating former combatants and finding solutions to issues relating to employment for young people, who are easy prey for unscrupulous warlords. However, none of this will be possible if the Peacebuilding Commission does not possess the means to support the efforts of post-conflict countries, which continue to be in a vulnerable position long after the resolution of the crisis. My country therefore appeals to the traditional donors and international civil society partners to make the Peacebuilding Fund a viable and effective tool to meet the urgent needs of post-conflict countries. We need to provide the Commission with the tools that will enable it to pursue its actions by giving it the financial and technical support that it needs so as to ensure that millions of children emerging from darkness will have an opportunity to go to school without fear of being felled by a mine.

In conclusion, I would like to commend the Commission Chairman, Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins, and the other members of the Peacebuilding Commission, which has already reviewed the cases of Sierra Leone and Burundi — two African countries that have gone through many years of conflict but which, thanks to the genius of their peoples and the support of the international community, have made their way back to the path of peace and stability.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): The Japanese delegation expresses its appreciation to you, Mr. President, for your timely initiative to organize this important open debate. This meeting, together with the forthcoming General Assembly debate on the same subject scheduled for 6 February, will mark the first significant step towards setting the peacebuilding agenda in the broader United Nations system-wide context, which will, in turn, certainly contribute to improving the work of the Peacebuilding Commission itself.

The Peacebuilding Commission has been established as an intergovernmental advisory body to address issues which encompass the mandates of the principal organs, including the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as of numerous other bodies within the United Nations system. This means, obviously, that there must be ways to ensure meaningful interface and interaction between the Commission on the one hand and those relevant principal organs and bodies on the other, if the work of the Commission is to be useful and effective. As a sitting member of the Commission and a past member of the Security Council through the end of last year, Japan has emphasized that point, advocating the importance of improving the cooperation among United Nations organs — especially between the Commission and the Security Council — and presenting some practical suggestions to that end.

That said, the core task of the Peacebuilding Commission is to bring together, under one roof, a post-conflict country under consideration and its international partners to discuss and bring into being an integrated peacebuilding strategy, appropriate to that country, that is sensible, coherent and workable. Through that process, the Commission is expected to contribute to effective peace consolidation in the country in question by bridging the gap between the post-conflict recovery phase and the development phase.

When it comes to matters related to the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council bears primary responsibility in supporting peace consolidation through actions falling under its purview — for example, by deploying United Nations peacekeeping operations and integrated offices. In that process, it is important to ensure that there are ways in which both the substantive and the procedural aspects of cooperation between the

Commission and the Council can be developed. In more specific terms, here are some ideas for consideration.

First of all, the Peacebuilding Commission has done some good work in identifying the specific needs for peacebuilding in Sierra Leone and Burundi. It has established the priority areas that are essential to sustain peace in those two post-conflict countries, and further efforts in that area of work will need to be strengthened. However, the key task of formulating an integrated peacebuilding strategy for the two countries has yet to be tackled. The Commission should accelerate its work on developing an integrated strategy, in consultation with the host Governments and involving all the relevant stakeholders, such as bilateral donors, the United Nations country team, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and civil society.

Secondly, any peacebuilding strategy to be developed will be useful only if it is implemented and delivered effectively on the ground. To that end, the establishment of an on-site coordination and monitoring mechanism would contribute significantly to the implementation of the strategy and should be considered.

In that regard, although Afghanistan has not been selected as a target country for the purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) in Afghanistan offers an interesting model. The JCMB consists of 28 members and is co-chaired at a high level by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and a special adviser of President Karzai. The members include the major financial and military contributors, neighbouring countries and international organizations, as well as key ministers of the Afghan Government. The JCMB is also a political body that provides strategic advice and coordinates international and national efforts aimed at the effective implementation of the Afghanistan Compact, which is, in effect, the living comprehensive peacebuilding strategy for Afghanistan. During the visit by the Security Council mission to Afghanistan last November, which I had the honour to lead, we had the opportunity to observe the functioning of that body. I believe that the replication of this model in other country situations, as appropriate, will serve a very useful coordination and monitoring function on the ground, involving all players in the peacebuilding effort.

Thirdly, if the integrated peacebuilding strategy is to contribute to promoting a transition from conflict to stability, it will have to ensure the seamless transfer of responsibilities from the post-conflict phase to the reconstruction and development phase. One of the model processes may be the transition from a peacekeeping operation to an integrated office and eventually to a United Nations country team, as we foresee in the cases of Sierra Leone and Burundi. In other words, we believe that the peacebuilding strategy of the Peacebuilding Commission, if it is properly formulated, should incorporate the exit strategies of peacekeeping operations and integrated offices. It is the Council's mandate to decide on the timing of the withdrawal of such missions. My delegation hopes that, through the consideration and implementation of an integrated strategy, the Peacebuilding Commission will provide valuable advice to the Council on when and how to exit these missions and hand over the tasks to the follow-up United Nations teams.

Before concluding, I wish to touch upon some procedural aspects. It is important to find ways to enhance synergy between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council by systematically streamlining the flow of information between them. Several steps will need to be considered for that purpose. First, the Chairs of the Commission's Organizational Committee and/or those of its country-specific meetings should make a timely report to the Council on their deliberations, in the form of a letter or a briefing. Secondly, the President of the Council and the Chairs of the Commission should have regular meetings. Thirdly, the Chair of the Organizational Committee or of the country-specific meeting should be invited to the public meeting of the Council on the situation in the country under consideration. Fourthly, the Council, after receiving reports from the Commission, should consider issuing its reaction in the form of a presidential statement or other statements, as appropriate, to encourage synergy and interaction in the process of formulating and implementing an integrated strategy.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Japan's strong commitment, as a member of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, to contribute to the work of Commission and to the relevant discussions in the Security Council. I am also happy to announce Japan's intention to hold a peacebuilding seminar on Timor-Leste in Tokyo this

March. I hope that the Commission and the Council will further advance the deliberations on the issue that we have discussed today.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the representative of Canada.

Mr. McNee (Canada): We thank the Russian Federation for convening this important debate today.

I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the delegations of Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

At the outset, I would like to express our appreciation for the very effective work of Assistant Secretary-General Carolyn McAskie and her team in supporting the Peacebuilding Commission in its crucial early phase.

The delegations of Canada, Australia and New Zealand strongly support the Peacebuilding Commission. It has a critical role to play in coordinating and integrating post-conflict peacebuilding activities. A strong Commission will move the international community past an ad hoc response to peacebuilding and on to a more coherent response embodying what needs to occur in a post-conflict setting to achieve lasting peace.

In the year since the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission, in December 2005, good progress has been made in establishing this new institution. Representation on the Peacebuilding Commission's Organizational Committee has been agreed, and a dialogue has been started to clarify the Commission's specific functions within the United Nations system. We were also gratified to see Burundi and Sierra Leone referred to the Commission by the Security Council in June of last year.

Despite that progress, the delegations of Canada, Australia and New Zealand have been disappointed by the overemphasis placed on procedural matters by some members of the Commission at the expense of substantive peacebuilding issues, which are indeed the core mandate of the Commission. Our delegations urge the Commission to find new ways of working that befit the challenges before it. That includes working informally when possible in order to maximize progress during this formative phase, refocusing on its core mandate of advising United Nations organs on integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding, giving attention and resources to reconstruction and institution-building efforts, and serving as a focused

forum for political discussions related to transitions from war to peace.

That mandate needs to be approached in an action-oriented, flexible manner, with results identified that can be realistically achieved. Our delegations also urge the Commission to develop modalities to ensure the active participation of civil society and other Governments in all areas of the Commission's work, since their input and participation are critical to the success of the peacebuilding process.

While we recognize that building peace is a long-term process, the delegations of Canada, Australia and New Zealand continue to believe that the Peacebuilding Commission should focus on those cases where it can have the greatest and most transformative impact, and which can be viewed as immediate positive contributions to kick-start a longer-term peace process.

Our Governments were very pleased to see the Peacebuilding Support Office undertake missions to Burundi and Sierra Leone to identify gaps in the peacebuilding process and to identify areas where the Commission could have the greatest impact. We were also pleased that the Governments of Burundi and Sierra Leone were able subsequently to identify key priorities for the Commission during the fall sessions of the Peacebuilding Commission. Now that those two countries have been declared eligible to benefit from the Peacebuilding Fund, we are hopeful that there will be early disbursements and early results from the investment made.

As Burundi and Sierra Leone make the transition from the fragile post-conflict period towards lasting peace, international support remains critical for consolidation of the gains realized so far. Sustainable recovery and peace cannot be achieved without addressing a country's needs in the political, social and economic spheres, as well as the interlinkages among them. The Governments of Canada, Australia and New Zealand were therefore pleased to see that the December sessions of the Peacebuilding Commission identify several cross-cutting thematic issues, including support for political dialogue for Burundi and strengthening democratic governance and gender mainstreaming for Sierra Leone. Our Governments view that as very important work to ensure that whatever activities are undertaken by the Commission do not duplicate efforts already under way, and that they genuinely advance international coordination to

ensure a positive contribution to the peacebuilding process.

While better coordination by the donor community and the international financial institutions is a key objective for the Peacebuilding Commission, our delegations view the Commission's work as more than just a location for pledging assistance. We hope that the work that the Commission is doing in relation to the national peacebuilding strategies of Sierra Leone and Burundi will begin to build the basis of an expertise for identifying and addressing in an integrated manner thematic areas that require attention in all post-conflict peace-building situations.

(spoke in French)

As Assistant Secretary-General McAskie pointed out, that task will require a new investment of intellectual capital aimed at developing a strategic peacebuilding framework. Needless to say, the Peacebuilding Commission will not be able to achieve its full potential until we are able to articulate that basic vision of its objectives and output.

That will require that such issues as security sector and justice sector reform, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants into society, gender equality, children and armed conflict, refugees and internally displaced persons be taken up on a thematic basis, both within the Organizational Committee and in the country-specific meetings. In that regard, we were particularly encouraged when, at the first country-specific meetings on Burundi and Sierra Leone, the Commission reaffirmed the centrality of resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security, for the implementation of peacebuilding strategies. That work needs to be expanded to other areas of cross-cutting significance as the Commission seeks to design a strategic framework within which the Peacebuilding Commission can frame its advice and its interventions.

The Peacebuilding Commission is a vital component of the wider United Nations reform agenda. The transition from war to peace requires major concerted effort to prevent a relapse to violence. We look forward to helping the Peacebuilding Commission in the coming months and years to clarify its role and make a positive contribution to the very important task of building durable peace in countries emerging from conflict.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Wigwe (Nigeria): On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month, and especially on the admirable way you have been conducting the affairs of the Council.

I should also express my delight to be able to address this body on the issue of post-conflict peacebuilding, with particular reference to the Peacebuilding Commission. In that regard, Nigeria fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

My delegation wishes to express confidence in the leadership of Angola as the Chair of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as in the members of its Bureau. In the same vein, we wish to commend the Peacebuilding Support Office for its commitment.

The Commission has performed well in the circumstances, given that, as a new body, it was bound to pass through initial difficulties. It successfully organized two country-specific meetings, which identified an agreed set of priority areas in the two countries under consideration. The country-specific meetings proved enriching and rewarding both for the members of the Commission and for the relevant actors.

The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission raised the hope that the international community had at last found the appropriate device to fill the gap between the end to conflict and consolidation of peace in countries emerging from conflict. Six months after the establishment of the Commission, we can look back with a sense of satisfaction that the body has fared well and produced the kind of outcome most delegations looked forward to. The countries under consideration assumed ownership of the set of priority areas identified and, in the end, have become beneficiaries of the Peacebuilding Fund. However, we would like to highlight the following points in order to improve on the gains and experience of the past six months.

First, country-specific meetings, by their composition and nature, offer the best forum to bring the Commission closer to the beneficiaries of its work.

Consequently, the Commission should encourage greater interaction with relevant actors on the ground.

Secondly, the Organizational Committee should meet more regularly to ensure that decisions taken are promptly pursued.

Thirdly, the Peacebuilding Commission should devote more time to resource mobilization.

Fourthly, members of the Commission should undertake visits to countries under consideration. In that connection, we note that, obviously, the political significance of such visits cannot be overemphasized.

Finally, the Commission should be results-oriented, especially as its success will be measured against the difference it makes to the lives of people in countries emerging from conflict.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Choi Young-jin (Republic of Korea): Post-conflict peacebuilding is a major challenge to the responsibility of the United Nations for ensuring global peace and security. In war-torn countries around the world, peace, development, human rights and democracy are threatened by the possibility of recurring or rekindled conflicts. Those conflicts can spill over all too easily into neighbouring countries, damaging regional peace and stability. In our interdependent world, Member States have an ever higher stake in curbing instability and mitigating the human tragedy brought on by recurrent conflicts.

That is why the States Members of the United Nations, in a manifestation of their collective will and wisdom, created the Peacebuilding Commission — to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations in helping post-conflict societies to successfully navigate the often treacherous path from conflict to sustainable peace. The Commission is thus designed to fill a critical gap by linking the United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities as seamlessly as possible.

My delegation notes with satisfaction that, since the creation of the Commission, two country-specific meetings have already been held, on Burundi and Sierra Leone, at which guidelines were developed for the allocation of Peacebuilding Fund resources to those two States. My delegation believes that those outcomes demonstrate the value and viability of the Commission.

Going forward, we expect the Commission to continue to grow its role in the development of holistic, synergistic strategies to coordinate the work of the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other actors.

It goes without saying that effective peacebuilding requires adequate financial resources. Currently available resources should be used as efficiently as possible, but greater resources are clearly needed. My delegation hopes that, as the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund fulfil their mandates and prove their worth, Member States will recognize their achievements by increasing their contributions to the Fund. The Peacebuilding Fund should also play a catalytic role in responding to the initial needs of post-conflict societies, sustaining international attention and initiating inflows of financial resources from the international community to help with rebuilding and development.

National ownership is another crucial element of post-conflict peacebuilding efforts, which should serve the needs of the people on the ground. Nevertheless, as has often been pointed out, there are sometimes post-conflict situations in which national authorities are not able to participate meaningfully in peacebuilding efforts. While national ownership should be ensured as much as possible, peacebuilding efforts should also address situations where there is a lack of competent national authority.

The Republic of Korea has demonstrated its support for peacebuilding through its participation in United Nations activities in East Timor and other post-conflict situations. As a further demonstration of that support, we have contributed \$3 million to the Peacebuilding Fund. We are hopeful that the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund will have a significant impact on international peacebuilding efforts, and we pledge to continue to contribute to the peacebuilding work of the United Nations in the years ahead.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mrs. Mladineo (Croatia): At the outset, let me thank you, Sir, for organizing this meeting to discuss our experience in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and explore ways of cooperation between the work of the Commission and the Security Council.

I would also like to say that Croatia aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Germany on behalf of the European Union. However, as Croatia has been elected to the Peacebuilding Commission from among those countries that have considerable peacekeeping and peacebuilding experience on the recipient side, I would like to say a few words from that particular angle.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established by resolutions of both the General Assembly and the Security Council in order to fill a gap in the peacebuilding area of the United Nations system. Croatia strongly supported that effort as, in our view, improvement in that respect is much needed. Therefore, we have to bear in mind that the Commission is a new body which is not meant to proceed in the business-as-usual way, but is supposed to adopt innovative ways to resolve post-conflict recovery. We consider it to be a work in progress.

The Peacebuilding Commission, as stated in Security Council resolution 1645 (2005) and General Assembly resolution 60/180, was established to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery. It is aimed at helping reconstruction and institution-building efforts and at laying the foundation for sustainable development. It also needs to provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations. Those are very concrete tasks. The country-specific meetings on the two countries that are currently on the Commission's agenda have so far shown that the Commission is on the right track in that regard. However, more needs to be done. The Commission needs to make sure to contribute to the further stabilization of peace in other fragile States as well.

In that regard, we believe that there should be a stronger connection between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Therefore, cooperation between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission is of the utmost importance. The establishment of United Nations Integrated Offices, similar to those established in both Burundi and Sierra Leone, is an important step in the right direction. There should not be a gap between peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts in the peace consolidation process. Some peacebuilding

activities can be undertaken even while a peacekeeping mission is still in place.

However, we have to bear in mind that each country is a unique case and that in-depth knowledge of a situation on the ground is a crucial prerequisite for our actions. We are therefore very much encouraged by the fact that the Peacebuilding Support Office has started to fully function. Its support is indispensable to the members of the Peacebuilding Commission in providing them, among other things, with in-depth information from the ground that will enable substantial and knowledgeable discussions about countries in question.

To that end, we believe that discussions on peacebuilding activities both in the Security Council and the General Assembly are exceptionally useful. They have to ensure effective and productive bases for programmes that should guarantee that a country in question will successfully emerge from conflict and be put on a sound and irreversible path to recovery and sustainable development as soon as possible.

This debate in the Security Council is particularly useful to the two countries that are on the agendas of both the Peacebuilding Commission and the Security Council. We believe that the Commission needs to produce a strategy and a road map with concrete, achievable and realistic benchmarks. National ownership of the peacebuilding process by the countries in question is of the utmost importance and should be the basis for that strategy. We believe that continuous contact with those countries is an extremely important feature of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. In that regard, the Security Council may judge the Commission's findings useful to its own consideration.

Let me conclude by saying that the value-added role of the Commission will be measured, as has been already said and repeated many times in different United Nations and other forums, by its impact on the ground. It is therefore important to work further on consolidating and rounding up its practices, to which Croatia, as a member of the Commission, is fully committed.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): My delegation would like to congratulate you, Sir, and the delegation of the

Russian Federation on your presidency of the Security Council for the current month, as well as on your timely initiative to promote this debate on the Peacebuilding Commission.

Brazil would also like to express its satisfaction with the Council's decision to appoint South Africa and Panama as the new members of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission for 2007, as well as to commend Denmark and the United Republic of Tanzania for their constructive participation in the Commission over the past year.

Through you, Mr. President, Brazil expresses its satisfaction with the presentation made by the Chairman of the Commission, the Permanent Representative of Angola, Ambassador Ismael Gaspar Martins. We acknowledge the presence of Ms. Carolyn McAskie, head of the Peacebuilding Support Office, and would like to thank the Office for its efforts in assisting the Commission. We also acknowledge the unprecedented mobilization of institutional speakers for this morning's session.

More than a year has elapsed since the 2005 Summit decision that created the new Commission, and six months since the Organizational Committee started its work. Even though the Peacebuilding Commission is still in a very initial phase, we welcome the initiative to take stock of the work done thus far and to prepare for the next steps. We hope that such an exercise can also be carried out by the Commission itself, and by the General Assembly, as proposed by the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement.

It is also appropriate that, at this early stage, in reviewing the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council seek the views of interested United Nations Members. The exchange might provide useful insight into the performance of the new body and ways to improve it, in the light of its particular situation vis-à-vis the main bodies of the United Nations system.

For over a decade prior to the proposal of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change to set up the Peacebuilding Commission, Brazil had been advocating a mechanism that would provide for a solid link between peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and sustainable development. After carefully considering the issue, we continue to hold the view that those activities are not consecutive stages in a process; rather, they embrace a set of complementary

actions that are required in order to help establish a basis on which a country in conflict, or emerging therefrom, will be able to build lasting peace and a fair and viable society.

Member States, especially those in post-conflict situations, have entertained high expectations with the launching of the new body. The Peacebuilding Commission has been widely regarded as a powerful instrument to help in the transition between conflict and sustained peace. However, even given that it is at an initial stage, the Commission has achieved very little, a situation that does not bode well for subsequent phases if circumstances do not change.

Strenuous negotiations gave birth, during the 2005 Summit, to this new member of the United Nations family. The built-in imbalance in the composition of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission generated much acrimony and can be faulted for such a shaky beginning. We believe that more focused attention must be paid to the principle of equitable regional representation.

We should be reminded that, although it is tightly related to the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission is not a creation of the Council alone. It is accountable to the whole United Nations membership, which has in the General Assembly the most democratic conduit to express its views.

As we have made clear in the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission on many occasions, the new body has a long way to go to improve its working methods, should it wish to operate effectively. It is a matter of concern that little attention has been given to the drafting of rules of procedure, which, in turn, has led to long and needless debates on issues of little or no relevance.

The Peacebuilding Commission is a very important organ of the United Nations and, as such, should be supported by the Security Council. For many countries undergoing the scourge of internecine conflict, the Commission can be the venue to muster the much-needed international cooperation to enable them to recover as early as possible from the problems engendered by political instability and lack of security.

We take satisfaction in the fact that two sister African countries, Burundi and Sierra Leone, have been selected for country-specific meetings. Brazil supports all efforts in the Commission to achieve a

successful outcome of those meetings, which will be critical to the future of the Peacebuilding Commission.

It is a matter of concern to my delegation that the Commission has yet to articulate short-, medium- and long-term perspectives for the process of peacebuilding in post-conflict scenarios. However, one thing is quite clear, as shown by experience: an early withdrawal of international cooperation from a country in its recovery process can be disastrous for efforts to create the foundations of lasting peace.

Brazil believes that the Security Council can help the Peacebuilding Commission to stand on its feet and gain legitimacy and authority as an advisory body in the United Nations family. In this regard, there are readily available examples of what the Council can do. It occurs to my delegation, for instance, that, when it indicates new members, the Council can help the Commission to have a more balanced membership; or, when the Council seeks its advice, it can do it in a way that would not reduce the Commission to a classical forum of donors and aid-recipient members. Also, we believe that the Security Council can join with the General Assembly in affording the Commission sufficient authority to discharge its functions properly. In addition, we believe that the Security Council should not limit itself to seeking advice from the Commission only after peacekeeping operations have been discontinued. The Peacebuilding Commission can play a useful role in countries still subject to conflict as it procures the international support necessary to put in place recovery strategies that can lay the foundations for sustainable peace and reconstruction.

By involving a wider array of actors, the reviews and discussions undertaken in the Commission should provide the Council with better-informed analyses of the possibilities of post-conflict recovery of the countries concerned, thereby improving the quality of its decision-making process. We know from experience that there is no gap between peacekeeping, recovery and development. International cooperation efforts should address all three aspects, for it is hardly imaginable that one can be lastingly secured without the others.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Skinner Klee (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): As this is the last day of January, we would like to congratulate the Russian Federation on its

assumption of presidency for this month and on having convened this very important meeting on the Peacebuilding Commission. We are certain that it will contribute to our collective effort to strengthen international peace and security, making it possible to secure sustainable development for States immersed in post-conflict situations.

In August of last year, under the presidency of Ghana, we had an opportunity to discuss this item in an open debate (see S/PV.5509) on peace consolidation in West Africa, a region that is in one of the world's most vulnerable continents. It must be said that half of the countries concluding peace agreements after experiencing conflict situations relapse into conflict even after such agreements are signed.

In the light of our own experience, which taught us valuable lessons and places us in a special position to comment on this issue, we would underscore all the elements of our history that led to our multifaceted peace process. In point of fact, despite the fact that we have achieved significant progress, Guatemalan society, 10 years after signing the Peace Agreements, is not fully reconciled. We still need to set the foundation for a more equitable and participatory society, rebuild our social fabric and create opportunities for development without exclusion.

Allow me to refer to the role to be played by the Peacebuilding Commission. After its initial organizational and informational meetings, it is now to contribute effectively to creating a favourable environment to strengthen institutional capacities, as well as to articulate strategies that will help to achieve sustainable peace and development in post-conflict societies.

We believe that this Commission has filled a large gap in the United Nations system. For the first time in history the Organization now has a pre-established system with an adequate mandate to deal with and eradicate all stages of conflict, that is, to prevent conflict and maintain and build international peace and security. Never before have we had such complex tools for assisting countries where peace has been violated and where there are serious violations of human rights, countries which lack human security and good governance, where people do not enjoy democracy and rule of law and are victims of food insecurity and extreme poverty, to mention just a few

of the challenges facing people when they emerge from prolonged conflict.

We must now ensure that all of these mechanisms will be effective and long-standing as well as flexible. We must ensure that they are always based on the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

We must bear in mind that building peace is not achieved only by preventing outbreaks of violence, nor by physical rebuilding, nor by establishing a legal basis for a State. The Peacebuilding Commission must go far beyond that and support comprehensive changes that will eliminate practices of social, economic and political exclusion and transform State institutions so that citizens not only have renewed faith in those institutions but also can participate in them. Those institutions must meet the greatest needs of the population, beginning with demobilization, disarmament and reintegration following with reconciliation, compensation and due process.

Bearing in mind the experience gained in the ad hoc advisory groups of the Economic and Social Council on African countries emerging from conflict, we believe that it is important for the Commission to collaborate proactively, not just in the important work of mobilizing international cooperation, but also in aiding national authorities to establish their own priorities and design realistic strategies and consistent policies appropriate to the circumstances and environment of each country.

With regard to the cooperation that the Commission can provide to the Security Council, it must be, first, of an advisory capacity, to propose integrated peacebuilding and recovery strategies following conflicts, and it must provide information to ensure predictable financing for initial recovery activities.

Secondly, it must serve as a real link between the activities carried out immediately after a conflict, on the one hand, and recovery and development activities in the long term, on the other hand, in which all actors are involved in an organized process of transition and recovery. They must be able to interact openly and transparently in this process.

Thirdly, such cooperation must also provide a follow-up mechanism to ensure that due attention is paid at the international level to countries emerging from conflicts, even when the peacekeeping forces

have stopped playing an active role. Consolidation of peace must be seen as part of the process. We must not forget the role of the Economic and Social Council in its own area, contributing to greater interaction, coordination and harmony, not just between both Councils, but also throughout the United Nations system.

International cooperation and coordination are essential, and the role of the United Nations worldwide is irreplaceable. Therefore, building peace does not just depend on the daily work of the Peacebuilding Commission, nor the work of the Economic and Social Council, nor that of the Security Council or of peacekeeping missions, nor on the support provided by agencies, funds and programmes. It depends also on establishing and strengthening the context in which dialogue, tolerance and understanding can flourish. Peacebuilding must be the result of an internal effort, complemented significantly by the United Nations and the international community, which must always work in solidarity, but never as a replacement.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Through you, Mr. President, we would like to express to the other members of the Council how important we believe today's meeting is.

For Uruguay, the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, like the creation of the Human Rights Council, is one of the most solid and necessary achievements in the present reform process of this Organization. Throughout its history, the United Nations has played an essential and irreplaceable role for international peace and security with the goal of facilitating peaceful solutions to conflicts, within or between States, primarily through its peacekeeping operations.

Other speakers today have observed that despite those efforts, the international community has noted with great concern two trends that have gained ground in recent years. On the one hand, a vast number of countries emerging from conflict lack basic State institutions and require emergency humanitarian assistance. On the other hand, and no less disturbing, a great number of those countries that manage to emerge from situations of war and violence relapse in a short period of time. The result is well known: a resumption of hostilities, the unleashing of violence against the civilian population, economic and social chaos and the collapse of the State. Perhaps one of the most telling

examples of this can be found in our own hemisphere of the Americas.

In a few days the Security Council is to decide on the renewal of the mandate for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). This is the fifth stabilization mission in that country, and it is clear evidence of the high cost paid when attention and international assistance focus on ending armed violence without dealing with the other dimensions of the conflict.

For Uruguay, the Peacebuilding Commission is a direct response to the need for an institutional mechanism within the United Nations system to deal exclusively with meeting the special needs of countries emerging from conflict situations. My country is firmly committed to the consolidation of international peace and security. The fact that it is the seventh largest troop contributing country to United Nations peacekeeping operations is proof of that. We are also the country with the world's largest per capita contribution to troops. Uruguay is presently participating in 12 of the 15 peacekeeping missions deployed in Africa, America, Asia and Europe.

Since its first participation in peacekeeping missions to the present time, Uruguay has gained experience in matters related to reconstruction and the consolidation of peace in areas devastated by conflicts. We have made enormous efforts to put an end to hostilities, to ensure that societies and communities will agree to peace and to ensure national reconciliation. Uruguayan troops have also provided important assistance to States during elections as part of efforts to protect the civilian population in countries that are victims of social collapse.

We wish to express in the Security Council, as our regional group expressed in the General Assembly, our great concern at the lack of representation of Latin American and Caribbean countries in the Peacebuilding Commission. The situation is even more evident in the category of principal troop-contributing countries, where one single subregion is represented with three States while the other two members belong a single other regional group. The membership of the Commission must reflect the participation of countries in peacekeeping missions, experience gained in peacebuilding and equitable geographic representation, in order to ensure that recommendations reflect the

various points of view of the great number of actors involved in restoring peace after conflict.

Our country renews its commitment here to United Nations peacekeeping missions and to peacebuilding worldwide. We reiterate our desire to be part of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Uruguay welcomes the organizational progress achieved so far by the Commission. In its brief existence, it has already adopted rules of procedure and set up the voluntary Peacebuilding Fund, which is of particular significance given the lack of essential financial mechanisms for peacebuilding activities once agreements putting an end to hostilities have been signed.

The Commission has begun to consider the situations in Sierra Leone and Burundi. Uruguay also took part in peacekeeping operations in both of those countries. Our delegation continues to follow closely the work of the Commission on Sierra Leone and on Burundi, and we encourage the adoption of recommendations that will make it possible to rebuild and consolidate peace in both those nations.

The Peacebuilding Commission must be the main focus of international efforts in defining concrete actions to make progress towards the recovery, reintegration and reconstruction of countries emerging from armed conflict and thus set the foundation for their sustainable development.

In this task, it is essential to have the active participation of all States members of the Commission. The Commission must have the valuable support of those nations whose experience has been won on the ground through a sustained commitment to world peace. It is also essential to ensure effective coordination with United Nations specialized agencies, multilateral financial bodies and other actors involved.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I wish to thank you for organizing this open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding. Egypt hopes it will further enhance the interaction and integration of the roles played by the principal organs of the United Nations in order to achieve the stability and development that the States emerging from conflict aspire to, and that it will accomplish the desire of the

international community to help prevent those States from relapsing into conflict.

I wish to express my full support for the statement on this issue made by the ambassador of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The principal objective for the adoption of two parallel resolutions by the Security Council and the General Assembly establishing this pivotal organ was to ensure ongoing involvement of the international community in conflict situations without interruption. Accordingly, the Security Council would deal with these considerations when they constitute threats to international peace and security until peace and stability are re-established. Then a larger role for both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and their relevant subsidiary bodies would evolve more vigorously and effectively, in order to deal with the requirements of the reconstruction and rehabilitation phase and move towards economic and social development in coordination with the other United Nations bodies and the international finance institutions and donor States.

The resolutions establishing the Peacebuilding Commission do not delineate clear-cut definitions of the roles of each of the principal organs in this regard. Hence, and in light of the lack of provisions on this issue in the Commission's rules of procedures, the complementarity of the roles of the three principal organs becomes essential to achieve the objectives behind establishing the Commission, without any of them attempting to encroach on the prerogatives of the other organs, which were delineated and maintained by the Charter since the foundation of the United Nations.

As it is too early to assess the role of the Peacebuilding Commission, whether in the Security Council or the General Assembly, our meeting today would only be useful in considering the lessons learned from the Commission's activities in the past six months, not in order to criticize or commend them, but rather to prepare a joint foundation with the General Assembly for a real take-off on solid grounds. Such an exercise would surely support the assessment now being conducted by the working group established specifically for this purpose within the Commission, under the chairmanship of the Permanent Representative of El Salvador.

The past few months have shown that the consensus rule is a double-edged weapon. They have

proven that there is a dire need for detailed rules of procedure governing the Commission's activities in the absence of any precedents. They have also confirmed that enhancing the functioning of the Commission needs institutional improvement, through the establishment of the desired balance between the role of the Organizational Committee, the country-specific configurations and the Peacebuilding Support Office, and to guarantee that all members of the Commission are able to perform the roles for which they were elected or appointed, without discrimination between donor and non-donor countries. There should be no special relationship between the donor countries, the State whose case is under consideration and the Peacebuilding Support Office in charting the plans and in their implementation.

Our position vis-à-vis peacebuilding is unchanged, and it will remain unchanged. It rests on the principle of national ownership of post-conflict strategies, in terms of planning and implementation equally. It rejects changing the Peacebuilding Commission into a trusteeship council that controls the future of the States emerging from conflicts. It rejects the transformation of the Commission into a mere broker or mediator that brings together the donor and recipient countries under the supervision of the Secretary-General.

Our approach to peacebuilding is based on transparency and accountability, on the common responsibility of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, without allowing any of them to prevail over the other. It is based on the responsibility of every State joining the Peacebuilding Commission to perform its role with objectivity and integrity, to rally all possible support for the States emerging from conflicts, enabling them to cement the peace and stability they have achieved. It is based on the need to make the role of the Commission visible on the ground in these States, in order to reaffirm the international community's continued attention and support.

The cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone are examples of what can be achieved in terms of progress. Egypt hopes that we can benefit from their experiences, and that we assess our performance towards them in a correct and sound manner that would allow us to support the peace in these two sisterly countries and to realize their aspirations to peace and

development, and would allow us at the same time to perform better in dealing with other cases in the future.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, first of all, I would like to congratulate you and your delegation on the way in which you have been leading the debates during your presidency of the Security Council. Likewise, I thank you for the timely holding of this open debate on an issue of such importance.

The creation of the Peacebuilding Commission is the result of our Organization's need for an institutional mechanism that could assist countries emerging from conflict situations or that are at risk of relapsing into conflict, with a view to helping them achieve peace as an indispensable step towards their development.

From the beginning of negotiations leading to the establishment of the Commission, the delegation of Argentina has participated actively in the discussions of the different structural aspects, which led to resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. Those resolutions defined the main objectives of the Peacebuilding Commission, focusing on reconstruction and on consolidation of the institutions necessary for post-conflict recovery, and laying the foundation for sustainable development. In our view, the Peacebuilding Commission is a fundamental instrument that will in future allow us directly to address actions leading to reconstruction and institutional recovery of States after suffering conflicts.

Likewise, the subsequent establishment of the Peacebuilding Fund must be considered as the ideal way for the international community to obtain foreseeable financing for initial recovery activities and to extend the period for post-conflict recovery. Thanks to the Fund, we will be able to set out emergency plans on the basis of predictable funding.

Responding to the appeal of the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission has already held its first formal meetings to consider the situations of Burundi and Sierra Leone, with the Governments of both countries participating. In this regard, we would like to underline the significance of the participation of those countries in the assessment of their own situations. Presentations by Governments or local representatives to the Commission make detailed analysis possible and allow for a more complete picture to be painted. Such

information will make it possible to identify priorities with greater precision, taking into account requirements and resources. In that connection, a calendar of short-, medium- and long-term objectives could be set out, on the basis of what we believe must be clear and precise rules, established by the Commission, which must be in keeping with the spirit of the Organization and respond to the wishes of the international community.

At the same time, we believe that the report to be produced by the Commission, with recommendations, should also include mechanisms for achieving goals and implementing plans, as well as provisions for supervision so as to prevent the funds from being diverted.

To those two elements to which we have just referred — clear and precise rules and supervision — we would like to add another, which we believe is vital for the orderly and predictable functioning of any organization: the establishment of rules of procedure. We know that such rules have been outlined by the Commission, and we trust that their prompt definition will help to improve its functioning, leading to a fruitful outcome.

Before concluding, my country would like to congratulate the two new States members of the Peacebuilding Commission, elected by the Council: Panama and South Africa. Argentina particularly welcomes the inclusion of Panama in the Commission, as that allows for the correction of the imbalance in terms of regional representation, which is an underlying principle of this Organization and one on which my country, together with other Latin American nations, has put great stress.

I would also like to note that my country continues to be convinced of the wisdom of establishing the Commission, which will allow for the completion of the final phase of post-conflict situations and the reconstruction and the strengthening of institutions, so that conflict can be left behind for good. We know from experience that it is not possible to resolve conflicts by means of military operations alone.

Finally, I would like to say that while security is the first pillar upon which peace can be achieved in any conflict, the role of the United Nations must be directed towards fostering development and ensuring respect for and defending human rights. We therefore

believe that the work of the Peacebuilding Commission must also be directed towards those goals.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): I should like to begin by commending you, Mr. President, for the able manner in which you have led the work of the Council during the month of January. Allow me also to express my delegation's appreciation to you for having convened today's open debate on the important topic of post-conflict peacebuilding. The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission on 20 December 2005 marked a major step forward towards achieving a more efficient and effective Organization. It also marked a turning point in the efforts of the United Nations to promote peace, stability and development in post-conflict countries and in countries emerging from conflict.

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan notes with great satisfaction the launch of the Peacebuilding Fund on 11 October 2006 and the subsequent convening of four country-specific meetings, on Burundi and on Sierra Leone, as a clear indication of the international community's determination to achieve long-term peace and stability in countries emerging from conflict.

As a country emerging from more than two decades of armed conflict, Afghanistan is well aware of the challenges associated with post-conflict peacebuilding. In a relatively short period of time, we have made significant gains towards a stable and democratic Afghanistan. The convening of the emergency *loya jirga*, the adoption of a new constitution and the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections are just some of our major accomplishments.

We managed to attain those achievements against the backdrop of numerous challenges posed to our peacebuilding efforts. We attribute those successes to two primary factors: first, the determination of the Afghan people to live in peace and tranquillity; and, secondly, the sustained support of the international community, in particular the United Nations.

On the basis of our experience, we have come to realize that effective peacebuilding requires a comprehensive and multifaceted strategy encompassing the essential components of social and economic development, good governance, human rights, the rule

of law and national reconciliation, as well as the proactive and sustained engagement of the international community. In this context, we also underscore the importance of the leadership role of the country concerned in the process.

As His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, the former Secretary-General, stated on the occasion of the launching of the Peacebuilding Fund,

"Although peacebuilding is a collective effort, involving the international community, it is the Government of the country concerned that carries the main responsibility for setting priorities in ensuring that a peace process can be sustained. National ownership is the core principle of peacebuilding, and the restoration of national capacity to build peace must therefore be at the heart of our international efforts."

We are also of the view that the creation of mechanisms with a mandate to coordinate and monitor peacebuilding efforts will be crucial to the overall process. As mentioned earlier by His Excellency Mr. Kenzo Oshima, the Joint Coordinating and Monitoring Board in Afghanistan, comprising representatives of the Afghan Government and the international community, has proved effective as such a mechanism.

The initial stage of post-conflict peacebuilding necessitates altering the conditions that gave rise to a particular conflict. Adopting a passive stance in dealing with dominant threats will not only complicate the situation but also jeopardize the process in its entirety. As in the case of Afghanistan, continuing terrorist attacks in the south and south-eastern parts of the country constitute the main threat to Afghanistan's peacebuilding process. Those attacks have drastically affected the daily lives of the people and have hampered the reconstruction and rehabilitation process. It is therefore essential to address both internal and external factors that contribute to insecurity in a particular country. In that regard, we also stress the need to enhance the capacity of national security institutions to effectively address prevailing security challenges.

Equally important is the need to accelerate the pace of social and economic development, as security and development are not only interconnected, but also mutually reinforcing. We have come to realize that improving security in post-conflict countries will not

be achieved by military means alone; it will also require sustained economic development.

The successful reintegration of ex-combatants in post-conflict countries will depend largely on the launching of quick-impact reconstruction projects and the creation of employment opportunities. That will encourage former combatants to reintegrate fully into civilian life and to refrain from joining illegal armed groups.

National reconciliation can be vital to a successful peacebuilding process and can enhance dialogue among all segments of society and the peace processes necessary to achieve national peacebuilding goals. An inclusive political process — one that ensures equal representation and participation by all national actors and stakeholders — will lead to greater confidence-building. In that regard, allow me to mention that the full participation of all of Afghanistan's ethnic groups in main political parties and the political process was one of the key factors that contributed to the successful implementation of the Bonn Agreement of 2001.

Finally, Afghanistan emphasizes the need for the international community to maintain an adequate level of aid, including the provision of financial assistance, to countries emerging from conflict with a view to facilitating a smooth transition from conflict to lasting peace and stability. The political presence of the United Nations through its country team, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, together with the active role of development agencies under the umbrella of the United Nations Development Programme Resident Coordinator, will contribute significantly in that regard.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Afghanistan's full support for the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. We stand ready to share with the Commission our experience and the lessons learned in our peacebuilding efforts. We also remain confident that this newly established Commission will spare no effort in carrying out its important and noble task of securing peace and tranquillity in post-conflict countries.

The President (spoke in Russian): On behalf of the presidency and the delegation of the Russian Federation, I wish to sincerely thank all participants in this debate for their interesting statements and their active cooperation in today's Security Council meeting.

which considered the important issue of enhancing the effectiveness of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.



Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5628th meeting

Monday, 12 February 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Burian	(Slovakia)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Jenie
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Chávez
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnston
	United States of America	Mr. Brencick

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2007/50)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of February, I should like to take the opportunity to pay tribute on behalf of the Council to Mr. Vitaly Churkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of January 2007. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing my deep appreciation to Ambassador Churkin for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2007/50)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Brazil, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines, Portugal, Singapore and Timor-Leste, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Security Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister of Timor-Leste.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ramos-Horta (Timor-Leste) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the course of the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security

Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Khare to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/50, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Khare: This is my first appearance before the Security Council as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, and it is a great pleasure for me to introduce today the first report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), contained in document S/2007/50 and covering the period until 26 January 2007.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the presence amongst us of Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. I would like to thank the leadership of Timor-Leste for the warmth, graciousness and cooperation that I have received from all of them. The Government, organs of sovereignty, other relevant institutions of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and UNMIT are working well together to fulfil the mandate given by the Council in its resolution 1704 (2006). The Committee on High-level Coordination, foreseen in operative paragraph 8 of the resolution, held its first two fortnightly meetings in January. In addition, Prime Minister José Ramos-Horta and I have established a regular pattern of weekly meetings which are, of course, supplemented by additional meetings during the course of the week, depending upon situational requirements. Regular dialogue is also being

maintained with President Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, President of the National Parliament Francisco "Lu-Olo" Guterres, leaders of political parties and civil society organizations, as well as diplomatic missions represented in Timor-Leste.

These are important times for the young nation of Timor-Leste as it prepares for its first national elections since the restoration of its independence. The first round of presidential elections is scheduled to be held on 9 April, and the date for the parliamentary election will be announced thereafter. The authorities of Timor-Leste and its people are working to ensure elections that are credible, free and fair, organized in a transparent manner under the supervision of the independent National Commission on Elections, without violence or even intimidation, in conformity with international standards and with results that are broadly acceptable to all, so that the elections have a restorative and unifying impact on the body politic and on society. Codes of conduct for the political parties and their agents, as well as for the media and electoral observers, are being considered. A political declaration or pact concluded by all political parties is also being actively debated.

These will be the first national elections to be organized by the authorities of Timor-Leste, who, with the assistance of the international community, are grappling with several challenges that lie ahead. The challenges include the delayed onset of the rainy season, transportation difficulties associated with the difficult terrain and the state of the infrastructure, the need for better dissemination of information regarding the elections, as well as voter and civic education, in order to ensure the full involvement of the general public in the electoral process.

Security is clearly seen by all stakeholders as a critical element for the success of the electoral processes. The situation is demonstrating some signs of improvement, but remains fragile. The efforts of leaders of Timor-Leste to search for solutions to contain the criminal elements in the martial arts groups deserve praise. The progress in the deployment of UNMIT police into communities throughout all districts of the country has also proved useful in reducing response time and enhancing our ability to contain such incidents. However, although there are longer periods of calm and fewer outbreaks of violence, the situation is still volatile and spikes in violence still occur — most recently two weeks ago,

when four murders were recorded in Dili within a span of only two days.

UNMIT police and officers of the Timorese National Police (PNTL) deployed with them are working with dedication to maintain law and order. As an example of their good work, a large-scale operation was carried out on 31 January in two neighbourhoods of Dili, during which 48 people were arrested and a large number of lethal traditional weapons, as well as a few home-made firearms and improvised explosive devices, were seized. UNMIT police and the PNTL will continue to stand firm against those who engage in violence.

The screening of PNTL officers is progressing steadily. To date, 409 of the 1,098 registered PNTL officers in Dili have successfully undergone the screening process and refresher or reintegration courses, and are now working with UNMIT police. Another 64 are currently under training and 131 are waiting to participate in the provisional certification course. Two hundred and twenty-six PNTL officers are undergoing the screening process, while 315 have been identified as requiring further investigation. Following a request from the Government of Timor-Leste, priority is being accorded to the screening and retraining of PNTL members of the Rapid Intervention Unit. A graduation ceremony for the first 38 retrained officers of that Unit was held on 29 January.

However, it is clear that the process of screening, evaluation and retraining needs to be considerably expedited without affecting its integrity, particularly as quite a few PNTL officers in Dili have been found to merit further investigation. UNMIT will of course ensure that, as the Security Council has endorsed, PNTL officers are fully involved in the security-related preparations for the forthcoming elections.

Nevertheless, I believe that the deployment of an additional formed police unit, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2007/50), is essential for the pre- and immediate post-electoral period. That unit would be based in Dili but would also cover also the adjacent districts of Ermera, Aileu, Ainaro, Liquica and Manufahi. The additional unit would strengthen UNMIT's capacity to address security challenges, and thereby contribute to the holding of peaceful elections.

The conclusion of the trilateral memorandum of understanding between the Government of the

Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, the Government of Australia — as the lead nation of the international security forces — and the United Nations on 26 January was an important development that will enhance coordination of all security-related activities in Timor-Leste. Two operational-level meetings of the secretariat of the Trilateral Coordination Forum have already been held. Simultaneously, the conclusion of the technical arrangement between Australia and the United Nations has provided a formal basis for the provision of two dedicated armed companies, with necessary support elements, to ensure adequate protection for United Nations premises and property as well as a rapid response capacity for the UNMIT police. I must place on record my sincere appreciation to the international security forces, which have always responded positively to requests from UNMIT, even prior to the conclusion of the technical arrangement.

I am happy that the Government has taken steps to initiate the comprehensive review of the security sector. Terms of reference for the review have been drafted by the working-level committee co-chaired by Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General Eric Tan Huck Gim, which has senior representation from the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior, as well as from the PNTL and the *Falintil-Forças Armadas de Defesa de Timor-Leste* (F-FDTL). UNMIT will continue to play a strong supporting role in this review, which provides a vital opportunity to address the shortcomings observed during the recent crisis in both entities.

I strongly believe that justice is a precondition for national reconciliation. I am delighted that this view is shared by all leaders of Timor-Leste, who have repeatedly reassured me that impunity will not be permitted to prevail in Timor-Leste. I am encouraged that all organs of sovereignty have taken some positive steps towards the implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry. The ad hoc parliamentary commission established to study the report accepted all its recommendations and recommended additional measures of accountability, while also calling for further investigations and judicial proceedings in some cases. The recommendations of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry, as well as the additional recommendations made by the ad hoc parliamentary commission, were approved by the national parliament in a resolution adopted on

9 January. Furthermore, the Council of Ministers approved a resolution regarding measures for assistance and reparations to the victims. Those are important initial steps, but efforts must continue in order to ensure that all the recommendations of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry are implemented and any perceptions of impunity strongly refuted.

A number of outstanding issues require further attention. Fugitive Major Reinado, who escaped from Becora Prison together with 56 other detainees on 30 August, remains at large and is a serious threat to security. Efforts are being made to ensure that Reinado submits to the judicial process in a peaceful manner.

It is absolutely essential that international assistance is provided to the justice sector to meet the growing demands placed on it to follow up on the cases related to the events of April and May 2006. Furthermore, the development of capacities in, and the institutional strengthening of, the justice sector also require international support. The justice sector support programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the proposed comprehensive review of justice sector needs, to be led by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and supported by UNMIT, deserve special attention.

In consultation with UNMIT, the United Nations family, donors and the diplomatic community, the Government has made significant progress in the establishment of an international compact. The first meeting of the "compact" partners took place on 6 February. At that meeting, the Government announced that it had identified public safety and security; elections; public sector strengthening, including, *inter alia*, stronger budget execution; youth employment and skills development; strengthening of the justice system; and social reinsertion as the key areas to be addressed over the next two years. The first high-level meeting of the compact is tentatively scheduled for next April.

Let me now turn briefly to socio-economic issues. The Government, under the leadership of Prime Minister José Ramos-Horta, is working hard to restore, and indeed enhance, efforts to promote development of the country. Already, there are visible signs of progress in Dili, such as road repairs, improved street lighting, installation of traffic lights and beautification of parks. Significant efforts are also under way to fast-track

employment initiatives. The Minister of Labour and Community Reinsertion is preparing a national employment plan and a youth employment plan to address the challenge of unemployment.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, I must commend the Government of Timor-Leste for the tremendous efforts it has made in strengthening coordination, adopting a number of policies and initiating concerted action towards enabling dialogue and national reconciliation between fractured communities, thus facilitating the return and relocation of internally displaced populations. I should also like to commend the humanitarian agencies that continue to work tirelessly to help resolve the crisis of internally displaced persons.

However, internal displacement, food insecurity and disruption of basic social services are likely to persist beyond the elections. Significant improvements in the current situation will depend not only on the progress made in increasing the sense of security and safety of the population as well as the level of confidence in the judicial system, but also on the ability to stabilize the socio-economic situation.

In order to address the basic needs of internally displaced populations and other vulnerable groups, and to support their return, relocation and social reintegration, as well as to address the issues of emergency preparedness and transition to rehabilitation, an inter-agency Consolidated Appeal for Timor-Leste in the amount of \$16.6 million was prepared and launched in January 2007 in Dili by Prime Minister José Ramos-Horta. Its successful implementation will depend on timely and generous contributions by the international community.

Timor-Leste continues to strengthen its cooperation with other countries and regional organizations. On 13 January, the Prime Minister signed the Treaty on Amity and Cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which is a first step towards future membership of that organization. A conference on regional economic cooperation is being organized by the Government in Dili on 19 to 21 February to further develop measures in that direction.

The emergence of the crisis in Timor-Leste in April and May 2006 is a reminder of the need for the international community's long-term commitment to the new nation. Development and strengthening of

democratic institutions is a long-drawn process and requires continued support. The people of Timor-Leste, who are desirous of peace and stability in a climate of democratic, responsive and accountable governance, need the support of the international community in the months to come. The Secretary-General therefore recommends that the mandate of UNMIT be extended by an additional 12 months.

Before I conclude, permit me to thank the Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, Eric Tan Huck Gim and Finn Reske-Nielsen, and all the members of UNMIT, whose assistance has been invaluable to our efforts to achieve the tasks mandated by the Council. Their dedication and commitment, particularly under challenging circumstances, is a matter of great pride and satisfaction.

I greatly value this opportunity to address the Security Council on the report of the Secretary-General and look forward to receiving the Council's guidance.

The President: I thank Mr. Khare for his briefing. I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Ramos-Horta (Timor-Leste): First, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and to thank you for giving me an opportunity to address the Council today. I would like to commend the Secretary-General for the report before the Council (S/2007/50), and for the statement just delivered by his Special Representative, Mr. Atul Khare. I generally concur with its observations and recommendations. On behalf of the Timorese people, I thank the Secretary-General for having appointed such distinguished diplomats as Mr. Atul Khare and his team. I thank them for their enormous efforts and good work in my country.

Before I continue, I have to apologize; I may have to leave before the end of this meeting for a meeting with the Secretary-General. I apologize if I have to step out before the meeting concludes, but members of my staff will stay behind.

I would like first to address the question of the security sector. In May 2006, when Portuguese, Australian, New Zealand and Malaysian forces readily came to our assistance, there was a different situation: they saw a different Dili compared to the relative state of calm and order that we have returned to today. Then,

in May 2006, the Timorese national police, our police service, had disintegrated in the capital, and our defence forces were besieged.

Since then, the security arrangements established on the ground have been working. They provide an indispensable mechanism for coordination and cooperation in the security sector and thereby make an essential contribution to preserving the integrity, national reconciliation and development of the country.

In the police sector, the arrangement between the United Nations and my Government on the restoration and maintenance of public security in Timor-Leste is addressing both policy and operational issues of police reform. Because the Special Representative has touched upon details of the training and reintegration of our police force, and for the sake of saving time for the Security Council, I will skip some of my prepared remarks in that regard.

Under the United Nations Police Commissioner, Rodolfo Tor, the policing operations are starting to have an impact on returning law and order to the streets of Dili. I thank Mr. Atul Khare for his leadership and Police Commissioner Rodolfo Tor for his efforts. I also wish to express our sincere appreciation for the previous acting United Nations Police Commissioner, Mr. Antero Lopes, for his leadership in undertaking a planning and operational assignment and bringing it to a successful conclusion despite scant resources.

In view of the still-fragile and precarious conditions in my country, the President of the Republic, the President of the National Parliament and I believe it prudent to request the Council to consider the deployment of an additional formed police unit to be provided by Portugal. The Portuguese authorities stand ready to provide such a force in the lead-up to elections. As the past six months have shown, the Portuguese National Republican Guard (GNR) is a very effective force that served very well in Timor-Leste in 2001 to 2003 and has done so again more recently. It is for that reason that we have specifically requested that the GNR send us an additional unit to our country. We know that the Portuguese side is ready to deploy such a force, if requested by the United Nations.

External support cannot be the solution in the long run. Therefore, my Government, supported by the United Nations, has made it an urgent priority to

review and reform the entire security sector: the police and armed forces, including their management and overall governance structure.

"Força 2020" is a comprehensive study, just issued by the Ministry of Defence, that defines the objectives of the armed forces for the next 15 years and provides an assessment of what is needed to face the challenges ahead. That includes the creation of a military academy to improve training and doctrine, the deployment of military personnel to United Nations peacekeeping missions and the use of engineering units for civil protection tasks in the event of natural disaster.

To that end, new legislation has been adopted promulgating the regime for military promotions, the code of military discipline, the organic law of the Ministry of Defence, amendments to the organic law of the defence forces and a draft law on conscription into military service that has just been adopted by the parliament.

With regard to reconciliation, allow me to say a few words on the status of our armed forces, the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL). As members know, I am Minister of Defence, which is a role that I had not envisaged. When I accepted the responsibility of that role in the midst of the crisis, I stated to the parliament and to our people that I viewed it more as that of a chaplain and moderator, building bridges among the forces and with the communities. Both President Xanana Gusmão and I have put a lot of effort into healing the wounds between the police force and the F-FDTL. A number of joint initiatives are under way to facilitate that.

I can say proudly that our armed forces have demonstrated remarkable discipline since the tragic events of 25 May 2006. When they were ordered back to their barracks — having been called in at the end of the end of April to carry out law-and-order duties, which was not their responsibility — they complied. My recent decision to deploy them to guard the Government palace has not been challenged by the public.

Our defence force was the subject of malicious rumours that proved to be unfounded. In its report, the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry found no basis for the allegation that the defence force had been involved in massacres. The pride of the force was wounded, but the combined effect of being cleared of

the rumours of mass killings and resuming some regular activities is assisting them in healing that wounded pride.

Regarding the issue of the so-called petitioners, we have made some progress. On 27 April 2006, at the beginning of the crisis, the then-Prime Minister, Mari Alkatiri, alongside President Xanana Gusmão, announced the establishment of a Commission of Notables to look into the allegations contained in the petition signed by 594 former members of the defence force. The report of the Commission is ready and will be released very soon, in the next few days.

With regard to the issue of national reconciliation more generally, I wish to place on record our appreciation to all our political, community and church leaders for their efforts. I thank the Government of Norway for engaging Gunnar Stålsett, retired Lutheran Bishop of Oslo and a former member of the Nobel Committee, as its special envoy to assist us in the dialogue process. I wish also to thank the European Commission, through the Club of Madrid, which has also assisted us in the dialogue process. In particular, I would like to highlight the event of 10 December 2006, led by President Xanana Gusmão, which brought the national leadership together in a traditional peace ceremony during which Timorese leaders publicly acknowledged collective responsibility for the crisis.

President Gusmão has also set up a commission involving our youth, who are among the most disadvantaged and disaffected groups in our society. They have not yet earned the dividend of our hard-won freedom, which we and they so eagerly expected and fought for. We must pay attention to them. They need to build a stronger sense of identity through stronger participation in our nation-building and community relations efforts.

The combined efforts of President Xanana Gusmão's national reconciliation programme, the Government's "Simu Malu" initiative, my personal engagement and United Nations police security measures are starting to bring under control criminal gangs and martial arts groups, recruited primarily from among the jobless youth.

The Government's "Simu Malu" policy initiative was born of the need to address the problem of the 150,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) at that time. "Simu Malu" — which, in our native Tetum language, means "to receive each other" — means that

IDPs are being received back into their communities, in line with the internationally accepted principle of voluntary return in safety and dignity. The programme has been successful to an extent. Still, 25,000 to 29,000 IDPs continue to live in camps in and around Dili.

Efforts are being made to access the real damage that we suffered during the crisis, through the development of an emergency reconstruction plan that includes a survey in the field that will enable us to plan for the relocation of families. At the same time, the Government has made land available for the building of new housing, which, although it will not cover all needs, will be a first step in providing support to displaced families, especially those at greater risk.

With the help of development partners, temporary houses have been built in several areas of Dili to provide shelter for IDPs, who are at risk owing to the rainy season. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those agencies and the donor community for their immense efforts and for responding generously to the United Nations appeals, as well as for their bilateral and local contributions.

The violence of last year led to the destruction of an estimated 2,500 houses, most of which were burned. The often violent manner in which many people were forced to flee their homes — some under severe and imminent threat to their lives, others intimidated by the throwing of stones onto the roofs of their houses — has brought to light a serious strain on our young country: the violence of today is part of a collective trauma caused by the violence of our past. Overcoming it constitutes one of the greatest challenges for our generation. We must learn to settle our disputes peacefully and to enjoy our individual freedoms responsibly.

We remain committed to achieving our long-term vision for the justice sector: an accessible system capable of delivering equal and efficient justice, upholding the rule of law and protecting the democratic system of the State, with the ultimate goal of sustainable growth for the benefit of our people. From a difficult starting point in 2000, we have come a long way in constructing our legal and judicial system with clear priorities: developing the legal framework for the country and institutional and human resources capacity, together with increased legal awareness among the general population. With the support of like-minded partners and through the United Nations

Development Programme, we are slowly but steadily progressing. Since mid-2006, as a result of focused, systematic capacity-building strategies and coherent in-country training programmes, we have had a small but qualified cadre of Timorese court actors working alongside and under the mentorship of more than 15 international judicial practitioners.

However, the 2006 crisis has had an enormous impact on our nascent judicial system, which was created to deal with a normal development scenario. The system is determined to provide justice for the people and to help restore social peace. Clear steps have been taken in that regard, with several sensitive cases having been investigated and already being tried. However, owing to the additional burden and complexity of the caseload resulting from the events of April and May 2006, the system is overstretched and not prepared to deal with this post-crisis scenario.

The State is united and determined to see justice done. The principal framework of assistance that the United Nations is providing to the sector must be enhanced, so that we can respond to the immediate need for justice delivery without losing sight of our long-term goal: developing the capacity of our institutions and human resources.

We are facing a twofold battle: the delivery of quick, efficient and impartial justice, as recommended by the Special Commission of Inquiry, alongside the long-term endeavour of forming — not reforming — a judicial system from scratch, knowing that the evidence indicates that the judicial reform process in any country needs 10 to 15 years to bear fruit. High, unrealistic expectations without adequate support to fulfil them can create unnecessary anxiety and lead to failure in both battles.

Notwithstanding our national reconciliation policy, we cannot accept impunity. Several cases currently on trial, including that of the former Interior Minister and cases relating to F-FDTL soldiers, demonstrate our commitment to equal and efficient justice.

In the case of Major Alfredo Reinado and of others implicated in the violence of May 2006, my Government, with United Nations support, has opted for dialogue — a prudent approach aimed at ensuring that justice can prevail without the use of force.

Another critical milestone on Timor-Leste's path to restoring stability will be this year's presidential and parliamentary elections. Parliament has recently adopted electoral laws governing both elections which provide a legal framework for a parliamentary, multiparty, party-list system, with a 25 per cent female representation quota, and for the establishment of an independent electoral commission. The United Nations Independent Electoral Certification Team has provided constructive feedback in the three reports it has submitted to date. They are being considered in the framework of the regulations to be submitted for approval by the National Elections Commission and in discussions on an interpretative law.

The President has set 9 April 2007 as the date of the presidential elections and will announce the date of parliamentary elections immediately following the presidential ones. According to Timor-Leste's electoral law, parliamentary elections must be held within 80 days of the announcement.

We are confident that, with extensive support from UNMIT, the presence of international observers and with an internationally supervised body of laws and processes in place, we can organize and conduct peaceful, free, fair and transparent elections.

Another cornerstone of Timor-Leste's development is economic stability, in particular the further exploitation of its petroleum reserves. Timor-Leste is blessed with significant natural resources that, if well managed, may guarantee our economic future.

The petroleum fund, which was established to guarantee transparency in managing Timor-Leste's petroleum income and to ensure that future generations benefit from our resources, entered into effect only two years ago and has already accumulated \$1 billion.

The National Parliament will soon ratify two additional agreements with Australia related to the exploration of oil and gas in the Timor Sea, in particular in the area called Greater Sunrise. We expect, following ratification by the two sides and the exchange of notes, that the parties involved in the Timor Sea will immediately begin additional investments that will bring significant new revenues to Timor-Leste within a few years.

In that context, I would like to commend my predecessor, Mr. Mari Alkatiri, for his able and pragmatic leadership in the context of the negotiation

of all petroleum treaties and concerning our maritime boundary treaty with Australia. I wish also to commend and thank Australian Prime Minister John Howard and Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer for their equally pragmatic and sensitive approach to the negotiations in regard to the three treaties.

In my inaugural speech as Prime Minister of Timor-Leste in July, I emphasized the fact that I would govern as an advocate for the poor. Poverty eradication, progress towards reaching the Millennium Development Goals, and the establishment of conditions for good governance will thus continue to be the guiding principles of my Government.

We have already increased the number of "cash for work" programmes; we have expedited rural development programmes across all villages; we have ensured that local leaders such as the *Chefes de Suco* have better and greater resources to do their jobs; we have increased scholarships for the young; we have provided financial support to widows, including those affected by last year's events; we have undertaken a radical review of our tax system, with the support of the International Monetary Fund; and we have streamlined the business development process, including legislative changes aimed at ensuring that doing business and creating jobs in Timor-Leste becomes more an attractive proposition.

However, building a State almost from scratch is a Herculean task. That is why, at this critical juncture, we need the continuing assistance and sustained commitment of the United Nations to successfully carry out this lengthy and arduous task.

When we look at our own region and at the success stories of Singapore, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea and others, we are reminded that success did not come to them overnight. It was the result of decades of dedicated and disciplined institution-building, socio-economic development, massive investment in vocational training and education, and the ability to convert setbacks into opportunities for the future.

Having said this, we do not wish to make excuses for our own shortcomings in the area of governance. But we believe that all of us have a better understanding of the challenges facing us than we did six years ago. I therefore plead with the United Nations to stay the course with us, so that Timor-Leste can eventually become a lasting success story. The

extension of UNMIT's mandate for another 12 months would be a first step in that regard.

We know that Timor-Leste is not the centre of our universe, and that, tragically, Timor-Leste is but one of many of the conflict situations of which the United Nations is seized and that requires its attention. However, the international community has made significant investments in our country since 1999. It has been labeled a success story, and rightly so. Some in the past have been overly optimistic, but that can lead people to lose perspective, to lose sight of reality, and turn pessimistic at the first sign of trouble. One day they label East Timor a success story, the next day they call it a failure.

We are not a failing State. We are a State that has existed for only five years, and what we have achieved so far — thanks not only to our own people and our own leadership but to the generous commitment of the international community — has been impressive. The crisis of April-May and of the following weeks is the type of crisis that many developing countries face at the beginning of their history and that some still face many decades after their independence.

The important thing that we have learned in the case of Timor-Leste and of other post-conflict situations is that the international community, bilaterally or through the United Nations, must remain committed and steady for the medium and long term. There are no quick fixes.

Again, I emphasize that we are conscious of the fact that we are not the centre of the universe, and that, unfortunately, there are many other conflict situations that require the attention of the United Nations. But an extra effort and investment in our country would go a long way towards consolidating peace and security there. Therefore, the extension of UNMIT for another 12 months is absolutely necessary.

I would like to be frank — allow me the frankness of someone who basically grew up with the United Nations. I began lobbying this very body — the Security Council — for the first time in December 1975, and that allows me some liberty to be frank with the United Nations. I am sure that members would agree that it would be unrealistic to expect even a simple take-away food restaurant in Manhattan to require less than one or two years of investment to achieve profitable and sustained management.

Therefore, it might require a bit more time — more than a year or two — to build a nation-State.

We believe, therefore, that — whether in Timor-Leste or in any post-conflict situation — there has to be long-term commitment. In the case of Timor-Leste, we are talking about a six-month mandate — in this particular case, six months after the establishment of UNMIT by the Council in August. UNMIT has not completely recruited the required personnel as set out in the submission by the Secretary-General to the Council. A six-month mandate creates instability for those who are recruited and sent on mission. People are individuals, with family commitments. They need certainty before they are sent off to Timor-Leste, or Afghanistan or the Congo. And when they have committed to a mission for six months, before the end of the mission — three months before — they begin to search the Internet looking for other jobs. Their attention begins to focus on job possibilities on the Internet, rather than on the job on the ground. It is with such frankness that I am asking the Council to seriously consider extending the Mission for 12 months.

The President: I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): As I am taking the floor for the first time this month in a public meeting, I would like to wish you, Sir, every success in discharging your responsibilities as President of the Security Council. At the same time, I fully support your comments about and share your feelings towards your predecessor, Ambassador Churkin, regarding his effective conduct of the Council's work during the month of January.

This is also the first opportunity that I have had to congratulate Mr. Khare on his appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste. I thank him for his enlightening briefing and his able leadership of the United Nations Mission in a challenging environment. We have heard a lot of good things about him here in New York.

This long list of greetings would be incomplete without a salute to Prime Minister Ramos-Horta, who honours us with his presence today. His wisdom and vision have guided the young country through its first years of existence, and are still needed in order to hold the course. His statement was, on the whole, encouraging, and offers to members of the Security

Council a very useful and — I would say — fresh take on the situation. It was challenging because it was very frank; we appreciate that.

Italy fully aligns itself with and supports the statement to be delivered later by the Permanent Representative of Germany on behalf of the European Union. My remarks are meant to complement those of the European Union.

The international community, and the Security Council in particular, has a record in Timor-Leste that is positive but not flawless. The tragic events of last spring showed that the United Nations presence in the country may have been downsized prematurely. Now it is time to show commitment and generosity in order to make up lost ground. The picture remains mixed at best, as clearly illustrated in the Secretary-General's most recent report, in Mr. Khare's briefing and in the statement by the Prime Minister.

The situation is encouraging, but certainly fragile. The security situation is, indeed, fragile and precarious, as the Prime Minister said, owing to persistent outbreaks of violence between youth gangs and martial arts groups. The provision of protection and assistance to the tens of thousands of internally displaced persons will remain an issue for some time. The electoral process is particularly complex, in terms of both organizational requirements and security.

Against this background, the role of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) is vital, as is cooperation with the international security forces. We welcome the formalization of that cooperation by means of a technical arrangement, and pay tribute to the efforts of the four countries contributing to the international security forces. Now the Security Council needs to respond promptly to recommendations to prolong and strengthen the mandate of the Mission. Too much is at stake. The political and economic investments made by the international community since 1999 could be gradually lost if we do not sustain them now and in the future.

The events of the past 12 months have shown that if we do not continue to make progress, we risk rolling back. Stalemate is not an option. One year ago, as Prime Minister Ramos-Horta recalled, Timor-Leste was considered a success story for the United Nations and the international community. I hope that in a few months we will be able to confirm that, indeed, we

have a success story. We are not going to be pessimistic.

Only free, fair and undisputed elections can truly re-establish mutual respect and genuine dialogue among the various political constituencies, building on the encouraging steps already taken under UNMIT's guidance. So important is this aspect that we hope that the European Union will be able to overcome any logistical difficulties and send an observation mission, at least for the parliamentary elections. The United Nations, for its part, will have to support the Timorese authorities until the end of this process and beyond, since — as we have learned from the report of the Secretary-General before us — it could take up to five years to rebuild the Timorese national police.

Those immediate needs should not divert our attention from the long-term challenges that must be addressed to ensure the sustainability of the stabilization process. I have in mind the long-standing issue of accountability for past and recent human rights violations. I am also thinking of the broader challenges of reform of the justice corrections sector.

We warmly welcome and are encouraged by what the Special Representative, Mr. Khare, and the Prime Minister have told us about the justice sector, impunity and the security sector. We fully share the Special Representative's view that "special attention" should be paid to the strengthening of the justice sector; it is a key sector. Unfortunately that sector and those who are connected with it are once again lagging behind others in a post-conflict scenario. The findings of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry are candid in that respect. It will be worthwhile to reflect carefully on these lessons when we hold the thematic debate on Security sector reform a few days from now in the Council on the initiative of the presidency of Slovakia.

Last but not least, we cannot overlook the fundamental importance of boosting social and economic development. It is always difficult to pursue long-term development objectives while political tensions and humanitarian emergencies are unfolding. But we have no other choice: long-term stability can be achieved only in an environment that is economically sound and investment-friendly. As both the Special Representative and the Prime Minister have said, development is a crucial need for Timor-Leste, and it must benefit the entire population. We praise the steps taken through the mechanism of the "compact"

between Timor-Leste and the international community to reinvigorate international efforts and coordinate them with the policies and aspirations of the Timorese authorities. Nor should we underestimate the role that can be played by regional partners and organizations: their contribution has increasingly proved to be positive and constructive.

As my Foreign Minister had the opportunity to indicate to Prime Minister Ramos-Horta during a very successful visit last October, Italy stands ready, both bilaterally and in the context of the European Union, to continue to assist the people of Timor-Leste in their quest to consolidate peace, democracy and development.

Mr. Brencick (United States of America): The United States welcomes Prime Minister Ramos-Horta to the Council today, and we take positive note of his remarks this morning, including on the need for sustained engagement with and support for his country. We also thank Mr. Khare, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for his balanced and detailed briefing on the situation in Timor-Leste, and we welcome the Secretary-General's report (S/2007/50).

The United States strongly supports and encourages the efforts made by the Government and political leaders in Timor-Leste to reach a political accommodation and reconciliation. We call on them to build on their recent efforts to regain the trust of the public. The United States urges all parties to act on the findings of the United Nations Independent Electoral Certification Team in order that free, fair and transparent elections may be held. We call on all participants to avoid violence and fully to respect legal processes in conducting the presidential and parliamentary elections this year.

We reaffirm the continuing need for accountability and justice in Timor-Leste and support effective and timely implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Independent Special Commission of Inquiry. The United States also urges that the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) take action as soon as possible to provide an expert investigation team to complete the outstanding investigations by the Serious Crimes Unit of the offences committed in 1999. Justice too long delayed can become justice denied.

With due recognition of the legitimate role of the army, the United States nonetheless expresses its concern that the presence of armed soldiers of the Timorese armed forces — *Falintil-Forças Armadas de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL)* — has served to heighten the sense of insecurity among the Timorese people. We urge the Government to ensure that the Timorese military assumes an appropriate profile and note that the United Nations police continue to have the Security Council's mandate to provide interim law enforcement and public security in East Timor.

Finally, we commend the efforts that UNMIT is making to reconstitute the Timorese police as an effective police force, and we support the Secretary-General's recommendation for the strengthening of the Timorese judiciary. The establishment of the rule of law is a cornerstone in the building of a strong and secure nation.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): At the outset, I wish to join previous speakers in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Ramos-Horta, and to express my delegation's appreciation for his statement. Let me also congratulate Mr. Atul Khare on his appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and thank him for his in-depth assessment of the situation in that country. I assure the Special Representative of Ghana's full support in the discharge of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and wish him great success in his very challenging role.

I take this opportunity further to extend our goodwill and best wishes to our South African colleagues as they assume the role of lead country on Timor-Leste. We look forward to working closely with them in the interest of the people of Timor-Leste.

Ghana has always followed with keen interest the peace and reconstruction efforts in Timor-Leste. We welcome all the positive developments that have occurred in the country since the destabilizing events of April and May 2006 and commend the entire leadership for their foresight and courage. We believe their experience offers vital lessons to developing countries, such as ours, that are equally engaged in the arduous task of nation-building.

In the course of 50 years of national independence, Ghana has suffered many setbacks and has learned that there is no surer path to national unity

and stability than through good governance, the rule of law and a vibrant economy. We are therefore pleased to see highlighted in today's discussion the determined efforts being made by the Government and the people of Timor-Leste to reconcile their nation and redirect their energies towards the vital tasks of consolidating democracy and the rule of law and building a sound economy.

By drawing on their time-honoured traditions in peacemaking to resolve their differences, the Timorese people have demonstrated their resilience and resourcefulness. We encourage them to employ the same wisdom and resolve in meeting the many difficult challenges that lie ahead. These include, among other challenges, tackling delicate security issues, reintegrating the internally displaced persons, holding national elections — which will be the first since independence in May 2002 — and, above all, implementing the recommendations contained in the report of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry, especially those aspects relating to political accountability and justice for the events of April and May 2006. As has been rightly observed in the Secretary-General's report (S/2007/50), justice is an essential precondition for sustainable national reconciliation.

In that connection, we remain concerned about the fate of the 594 dismissed soldiers who are still living on a stipend paid by the Government. It is our hope that the Commission of Notables that is addressing the petitions of those affected will conclude its work in due course, so that the issue can be settled once and for all.

On the other hand, impunity must not be condoned and we trust that those fugitives who escaped from Becora Prison will be accorded due process and dealt with, as appropriate, under the law. We believe the overriding consideration must be equal treatment of all citizens before the law. The various mechanisms that have been set up to handle these delicate matters must be given the necessary support in order to complete their tasks in a responsive and impartial manner. In particular, they must be encouraged to take on board the reservations expressed by opposition groups, such as Fretilin, about the report of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry.

Even though, in the final analysis, the primary responsibility for their country's future lies in the

hands of the people of Timor-Leste, they deserve all the support that the international community can extend to them. So far, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste has distinguished itself as a reliable partner, and we commend its leadership and staff on the breadth and depth of their endeavours. The activities of UNMIT reflect the interconnected nature of the problems of security, human rights, displaced persons, gender mainstreaming and poverty alleviation faced by Timor-Leste. They are all as vital as the need to ensure that next year's elections meet international standards, not least regarding the active involvement of women in the political process.

I wish to commend the Prime Minister for his eloquent, frank and passionate appeal for the continued engagement of the international community in Timor-Leste. We share his assessment that building a nation almost from scratch is a tall order. The international community should not leave Timor-Leste in the lurch. We are therefore sympathetic to the request for an extension of UNMIT's mandate for another year. We also support the request for the deployment of an additional formed police unit, which, we are informed, Portugal is ready to provide if requested, to strengthen security for the critical electoral process.

We are confident that the Government and the people of Timor-Leste will work with UNMIT in laying the foundation for realizing the modern, independent and prosperous democratic State for which many Timorese citizens laid down their lives.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February. I am confident that your skill and experience will be of considerable help as we carry out the work of the Council.

I wish also to thank Ambassador Churkin and the members of the Russian Federation mission for their wonderful work in January.

I welcome first the presence of the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Ramos-Horta, and his participation in our meeting today. I wish also to thank Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for his briefing and to wish him every success in the discharge of his new mission.

The year 2006 was a time of turmoil and conflict in various parts of the world. On its stage, there was ample space for the regrettable acts of violence that broke out last April and May in Timor-Leste. It is true that the situation is currently under control; however, the crisis in that country cannot be resolved overnight. It will require the long-term efforts of the people and Government of Timor-Leste, and support from the international community.

The solution to the crisis and the establishment of the sustainable stability to which the Timorese people aspire can be attained only if the Timorese pursue the path of national dialogue and political reconciliation. My delegation therefore welcomes the establishment by President Gusmão of the Dialogue Commission and the role it has played in promoting national reconciliation. We sincerely hope that the Commission will lead the country out of the impasse that plagued it last year, accomplish the mission for which it was established, and promote inclusive political dialogue with a view to restoring a cooperative relationship that will guarantee the achievement of national objectives. It is also our hope that the Dialogue Commission will assist the Timorese in regaining their confidence in their various national institutions.

Resolving the crisis will also require accommodating demands for political accountability and justice for the events of 2006. In that regard, the work of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry is of extreme importance. Overall, strengthening the Timorese judiciary is an essential condition for the establishment of the rule of law.

The crisis of internally displaced persons was one of the unfortunate outcomes of the violence that broke out last year. It remains a major problem, since there are about 150,000 internally displaced persons who need to be urgently resettled.

The security situation in Timor-Leste in general, and in Dili in particular, calls for an effective security sector. The Timorese national police needs to be fully reconstituted and developed. In the meantime, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) continues to play an indispensable role in supporting the security sector and promoting the rule of law in Timor-Leste. It is therefore essential to maintain sufficient numbers of UNMIT police.

Last year's events almost jeopardized the presidential and parliamentary elections in Timor-

Leste. Given their continued importance, the elections must remain a priority of the current year. The adoption by the Timorese Parliament of the laws on the National Commission on Elections is an important first step in that process. The United Nations can undoubtedly provide indispensable assistance in support of the electoral process. In his statement, the Prime Minister expressed the need for sufficient security forces in the lead-up to the elections. We share that view.

Good-neighbourly relationships among countries are the pillars of constructive regional cooperation. We therefore welcome the strengthening of friendly relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia, as well as the steps taken by the two countries to promote such relations through the exchange of high-level visits.

In conclusion, we take this opportunity to urge the people and Government of Timor-Leste to demonstrate the necessary discretion in addressing the crisis that has plagued their country and to give precedence to their national interests so that their new country may continue to progress on the path of building peace and promoting development and prosperity. We support the extension of UNMIT's mandate by an additional year.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Let me start by congratulating you, Sir, on your accession to the presidency of the Security Council this month. We look forward to working under your guidance this month.

We also thank the delegation of the Russian Federation for having guided us last month.

We welcome Prime Minister José Ramos-Horta to the Security Council. We thank the Secretary-General for his report and extend our appreciation to Mr. Atul Khare, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, the entire United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) team, and the United Nations country team for their efforts in assisting Timor-Leste.

We are indeed honoured and humbled to be selected as the lead country in the Security Council on the issue of Timor-Leste, and wish to express our appreciation to the delegation of Japan for the excellent manner in which it performed that role last year.

The people of Timor-Leste expect and deserve the support of the international community. For its part, the Security Council adopted resolution 1704 (2006),

which established UNMIT. The resolution remains an important framework through which the international community has expressed its commitment to the people of Timor-Leste.

However, the regrettable incidents of April through May 2006, which led to violence and political instability, demonstrated how fragile the situation remains. Thankfully, the Government and the people of Timor-Leste have taken significant strides in the political and economic spheres since then.

Now it is up to the international community to demonstrate a long-term commitment to assisting Timor-Leste in strengthening its institutions and deepening its young democracy. The world cannot afford to lose sight of the challenges still facing that country.

The United Nations must continue to consult with the Timorese Government about its role and involvement. Already, UNMIT has proven to be capable in carrying out its tasks in a responsible, effective and efficient manner. We believe that UNMIT needs to be strengthened and given an extension of its mandate. That extension will allow UNMIT a reasonable period to develop a framework for long-term stability and development.

The Government and the people of Timor-Leste have agreed to both the presidential and the parliamentary elections, to be held in April and June, respectively. These will be the first-ever elections conducted by the Timorese people themselves, with the support of the international community. The elections will provide Timor-Leste with yet another positive milestone in the country's efforts to consolidate its democracy. The fact that the election law requires that one of every four candidates be a woman will address the gender balance in the new Timor-Leste Government right from the start.

But the holding of elections is not in itself a complete answer to all of Timor-Leste's problems. We wish also to urge all the political parties in Timor-Leste to adhere to the principles of non-violence and to utilize the democratic and legal process in preparation for the upcoming elections, so as to ensure that those elections are declared free and fair.

For its part, UNMIT will be expected to provide support and assistance to the Timorese authorities as they conduct their first election. In particular, the

electoral process will require skills and expertise of an administrative, technical and logistical nature that may not be easily available within Timor-Leste. The Secretary-General has already made a request, which is fully supported by my delegation, calling for an increase in the United Nations police contingent to help strengthen UNMIT's capacity to address security challenges during the electoral and immediate post-electoral period. We were pleased to learn from the Prime Minister that Portugal is ready to assist with that request.

Furthermore, the people and the Government of Timor-Leste need firm assurances that the international community is committed to staying with them beyond the last election to be held. Once again, the Secretary-General has recommended in his report (S/2007/50) that the mandate of UNMIT be extended for 12 months, and my delegation fully supports that recommendation. The Prime Minister has called that recommendation and its implementation a first instalment towards lasting success for a State that is only five years old. We could not agree more.

The overall situation in Timor-Leste has improved, even though security conditions remain volatile. The Government and the people of Timor-Leste must redouble their efforts aimed at promoting and consolidating stability in their country. South Africa supports any steps towards consolidating stability, promoting democratic governance and political dialogue and fostering social cohesion. The Dialogue Commission, launched last November by President Gusmão, has helped to introduce a spirit of reconciliation in the country. But, as I said, the challenges facing Timor-Leste extend beyond political and security factors.

The country of Timor-Leste continues to be mired in poverty and underdevelopment. One in five people in Timor-Leste live on less than one dollar a day. The majority of the Timorese population, especially the young people, face unemployment and a general lack of opportunities. Thousands of people remain internally displaced and live in camps, following the political crisis of the past year. The Government of Timor-Leste has instituted a number of programmes to address those challenges, including public works projects in different parts of the country of Timor-Leste. However, those projects have not been enough by themselves to address the deeper needs of the country.

Several neighbouring countries — such as Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand and the members of the group of small islands of the Pacific — continue to provide the necessary assistance for Timor-Leste's long-term development. The decision by the Government of Indonesia to promote and support Timor-Leste for membership of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the signing by Timor-Leste of the initial accession memorandum are critical for the strengthening of relations between those two friendly nations. An official visit to Indonesia last December by President Gusmão not only strengthened cross-border cooperation between the two countries; it also helped attract Indonesian business investments to Timor-Leste. In addition, a Consolidated Appeal project for Timor-Leste was launched on 17 January 2007 to respond to remaining humanitarian needs for a period of six months. The Government of Timor-Leste presented donors with a "compact" that set priorities and refocused the national development plan to address the eradication of poverty and related socio-economic needs. The compact also places focus on the security challenges facing the country. We would hope that the international donor community will continue to contribute generously to the development programmes presented by the Government of Timor-Leste. Any signs of a better life for the people of Timor-Leste will help to create a better security and political environment, which is necessary for the holding of the important upcoming elections.

We welcome the signing, on 26 January 2007, of the memorandum of understanding between the Government of Timor-Leste, the United Nations and the Government of Australia, which established a Trilateral Coordination Forum to enhance security activities. We are optimistic that such a forum will add value to the role played by the international community in assisting Timor-Leste to achieve long-term peace and stability, including the much-needed security-sector reform and the strengthening of the justice system.

In conclusion, we reiterate our position that the long-term commitment of the international community to Timor-Leste remains essential. UNMIT and the country team continue to work in a complementary manner, with UNMIT focusing on the immediate security needs and the United Nations country team addressing medium- and long-term development needs, including addressing the humanitarian situation. My

delegation has no doubt that the Security Council will continue to have great confidence in, and attach high priority to, the people of Timor-Leste. The Prime Minister has said that Timor-Leste is not the centre of the universe. But it is a centre of our best efforts in helping the Timorese people achieve the better life they deserve. Let me assure the Prime Minister that, as far as we in South Africa are concerned, Timor-Leste is indeed the centre of the world.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): Let me begin by welcoming His Excellency Prime Minister José Ramos-Horta of Timor-Leste to the Chamber. His statement provided us with an insightful account of the situation in his country and of the wishes and expectations of the Government and its people.

My delegation appreciates the report of the Secretary-General and wishes to warmly congratulate Mr. Atul Khare for his appointment as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Timor-Leste and head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). We thank him for his informative presentation.

As Timor-Leste's closest neighbour, Indonesia continues to enjoy an excellent level of bilateral relations with that country. We follow closely the developments there and hold regular consultations with our Timorese counterparts at various levels. These include the meeting between President Xanana Gusmão and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in Jakarta on 18 December 2006, as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report.

We commend the efforts made by the leaders of Timor-Leste in promoting political and communal reconciliation with a view to addressing the underlying causes of the political crisis of April and May last year. It is our hope that political and other leaders of Timor-Leste put their national interests first and engage in good-faith dialogue, setting aside their differences and promoting common goals in order to create favourable conditions for the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections.

We welcome the significant improvement of the security situation in the country, as attested to in the report before us, which observes that although the overall security situation has tended to remain volatile, there have been longer periods of calm and fewer outbreaks of violence.

Indonesia continues to deepen and expand its bilateral cooperation with Timor-Leste. In addition to our bilateral joint commission meetings, which take place on regular basis, Indonesia, together with Australia and Timor-Leste, has also established a regular trilateral ministerial meeting as an avenue through which we can explore meaningful cooperation in supporting development in Timor-Leste. The last meeting was held in Dili on 4 September 2006, and we agreed to embark on various undertakings.

In the regional context, it is worth noting that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), at its summit in Cebu last month, decided to include Timor-Leste in the functional cooperation of ASEAN. In a spirit of partnership, Indonesia has expressed its readiness to assist. We are pleased to announce the appointment of an experienced Indonesian ambassador as senior adviser to facilitate Timor-Leste's participation in ASEAN activities. Upon the invitation of Timor-Leste, he will hold consultations with the Government of Timor-Leste this month.

The process of nation-building and reconciliation is a highly complex and sensitive matter. Therefore the United Nations and the international community should continue to play a constructive and nurturing role in assisting Timor-Leste to navigate its way through this important challenge. With particular reference to UNMIT, my delegation is of the view that one of its priorities should be to assist with and ensure the credibility of the forthcoming elections in Timor-Leste. The Mission should devote adequate resources to help in every aspect of the preparation for and conduct of the elections and to ensure they will take place in a democratic and peaceful manner.

We agree that successful elections are only one element of building a democratic State. In the context of the complex and delicate situation in Timor-Leste, the achievement of the forthcoming elections should go far beyond the election of the President and members of parliament; they should provide momentum for the return of this new nation to the path of stability and development. Durable peace and stability in Timor-Leste will be achieved only when the country's development challenges are addressed comprehensively. It is the responsibility of the international community to help ensure that this opportunity does not slip by.

In this regard, we note with interest the "compact" process between Timor-Leste and the international community, which entails a reorientation of the existing national development plan and external financing, as required, to deal with the 2006 crisis in the country and its causes. We support the integrated approach that UNMIT has embarked upon, and its collaboration and facilitation role with agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations towards focusing on the compact priorities. We are confident of the strong and dynamic leadership of the Secretary-General's new Special Representative in conveying a sense of vision and dynamism to all the stakeholders in Timor-Leste and the international community.

Finally, we believe that the policy lines followed by the Security Council in the past few years should continue, namely to promote as much as possible the self-reliance and ownership of the Government and people of Timor-Leste and encourage broad-based partnership with various actors for sustainable development. It is in this regard that we support the extension of UNMIT's mandate as recommended by the Secretary-General. We also support the Timorese Government's request that an additional formed police unit be deployed to strengthen security for the critical electoral process.

Indonesia, for its part, will continue to assist Timor-Leste in addressing the challenges it is facing on the basis of shared principles of peaceful co-existence and forward-looking, reconciliatory and mutually beneficial relations.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Mission of the Republic of Panama is grateful for the singular opportunity of addressing the Council in the presence of Mr. José Ramos Horta, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, since it gives us an opportunity to welcome him and express our respect for his dedication and resolute commitment to the welfare of the people of Timor-Leste. It is not very often that the Council has the honour of welcoming a Nobel Peace Prize winner who also plays an outstanding political role in a conflict situation in a country to which the Security Council and the United Nations have dedicated particular attention.

Along with earlier speakers, I am grateful for the detailed and comprehensive report from the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Atul Khare, who is also the head of the United Nations

Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). We also wish to congratulate him on his appointment.

The delegation of Panama has listened carefully to the report on the progress achieved and the difficulties encountered by Timor-Leste in its effort to carry out the first elections since independence. We have also taken note of comments on the particular support by UNMIT to promote favourable conditions for the holding of fair, credible elections that are in keeping with international standards.

However, as we have had opportunity to say in the Council in the past, transparent and credible elections are important, but they are merely one step in the complex process of consolidating a stable, just and representative democracy. This is the process that will give the people the confidence that the Government is able to secure social peace and sustainable development within the fair and inclusive rule of law. But none of this can be achieved without genuine commitment of national actors. It is in this context that we appreciate the efforts undertaken by President Xanana Gusmão's Dialogue Commission, which has been welcomed by Timorese leaders at all the nation's political and social levels. We are convinced that UNMIT has a crucial part to play in this process, as shown by, *inter alia*, the legal and standard-setting advice that is being implemented and by the integrated coordination mechanism set up among the various actors associated with the United Nations to arrive at a single criterion.

Many difficulties have to be overcome in order to create conditions propitious to the holding of national elections. We urge the Timorese Government to redouble its efforts to consolidate the necessary institutions and mechanisms in Dili and elsewhere to make sure that the elections can be held within an atmosphere of transparency and peace.

On earlier occasions, Panama has stated in this Council that efforts in favour of peacekeeping and peacebuilding must be coordinated in a comprehensive and consistent manner, so as to ensure that countries that put an end to hostilities have programmes, institutions and capacities enabling them to implement the measures necessary to the achievement of development that is both economically sustainable and socially responsible.

That is how the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) is carrying out its functions. In the Secretary-General's own words,

"UNMIT functions as an integrated Mission, which aims to bring together the peacekeeping, peacebuilding, humanitarian and development actors of the United Nations system". (S/2007/50, paragraph 2)

Consequently the Government of Panama energetically supports the Secretary-General's proposal to extend UNMIT's mandate for a 12 month period, to signal the Security Council's commitment to the people and Government of Timor-Leste. Because of the priority that should be attached to deploying police and personnel for electoral assistance from UNMIT in districts outside Dili to prepare support for the elections, we also support deployment of an additional police unit.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): My delegation is grateful to you, Mr. President, and to other colleagues for the kind words addressed to Ambassador Churkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, and to the Russian delegation on its presidency of the Security Council in January. We would also like to wish you success, Sir, in your important post as President. You can rest assured of the support and cooperation of the Russian delegation.

We are also very pleased to welcome to this meeting today the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Ramos-Horta. We listened carefully to his analysis and assessment of the situation in the country in the context of the ongoing peacebuilding processes. We are also grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Khare, for his briefing and for presenting the Secretary-General's report on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

The Russian Federation commends the efforts of the leadership of Timor-Leste in promoting national dialogue and reconciliation, reforming the security sector and the justice system, combating impunity and ensuring the return of temporarily displaced persons to their homes.

Although the situation in Timor-Leste has recently stabilized, it continues to be precarious. That was stressed today by Mr. Ramos-Horta, Mr. Khare and

other speakers. The flare-up in violence that took place in the capital in January and that, unfortunately, led to the loss of human life shows the need to continue to provide Timor-Leste with integrated international support in order to strengthen State institutions and carry out socio-economic reforms. We hope that, with the support of UNMIT and other international structures and regional partners, the Government of Timor-Leste will be able to successfully address the problems facing the country.

On the eve of next April's planned presidential elections, it is particularly important to ensure security in the country. We support the efforts of UNMIT aimed at providing multifaceted assistance to the Timorese authorities in preparing and organizing those elections, as well as ensuring the necessary security in the country. We have taken note of the request of the Timorese leadership to dispatch an additional police unit in order to beef up security during the preparation period for the elections and during the post-election period.

In general, we suggest that it is important to take account of the preferences of the Timorese side with regard to the future activities of UNMIT while taking account, of course, of how the situation in Timor-Leste evolves.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would first like to thank the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Ramos-Horta, for his presentation as well as Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his statement. We welcome the role they play in stabilizing the situation in Timor-Leste.

In a few minutes, the Permanent Representative of Germany will speak on behalf of the European Union and my delegation fully subscribes to that statement. I shall confine myself to the following comments.

The combined activity of the local Timorese forces, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the international security force has made it possible to somewhat improve the security situation in the country, but the stabilization is still incomplete and fragile, as we see from the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/50).

The presence of UNMIT and the international security force is therefore indispensable, as we see it,

in the medium term so long as the Timorese institutions are not yet in a position to take over. France is therefore in favour of an extension of UNMIT's mandate for a 12 month period.

I would also like to commend the regional States on their stabilizing role, and particularly the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, as demonstrated by the strong participation of Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore in UNMIT, as well as the strengthening of relations between Indonesia and Timor-Leste. I would also like to commend the part played by Australia and New Zealand. The particular efforts of Portugal also deserve to be highlighted.

In the short term, the main challenge has to do with organizing elections under satisfactory conditions. The elections are an opportunity for genuine reconciliation among the Timorese, which is the only guarantee of long-term stability. It is therefore essential that the Timorese authorities implement the recommendations of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry. We also support the proposal of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to expand UNMIT by adding an additional formed police unit to ensure security stability throughout the elections.

In addition, the international community must continue to support the reconstruction of Timorese institutions, in particular the reform of the civil and military security forces and of the judiciary. We are happy to note the good relations which have apparently been established between UNMIT, which is concentrating on the short-term situation, and the development agencies, which are acting primarily in the medium- and long-term ranges.

The implementation of the compact among the Timorese authorities and the international community is also a positive first step in a strategy of peacebuilding. We would be grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General if he would give us more detail about the functioning and prospects of that mechanism at a forthcoming meeting with the Security Council.

Reconciliation within Timorese society and between the Timorese and their neighbours must be based on a situation of transparency and justice. In that regard, combating impunity is a decisive aspect of such reconciliation. In that respect, we fully support the establishment by UNMIT of an independent Serious

Crimes Investigation Team to complete the work begun by the Serious Crimes Unit on the crimes committed in 1999. We also hope that Commission for Truth, Reception and Reconciliation will shed light on the past in order to better build the future.

Mr. Gayama (Congo) (*spoke in French*): I, too, should like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this important debate on Timor-Leste at a time when that country is approaching a historic milestone: the holding of important elections in April. I should also like, on behalf of my delegation, to welcome Prime Minister José Ramos-Horta, whose presence among us clearly reflects the expectations of the people and the Government of Timor-Leste with regard to this Security Council meeting. In addition, we wish to thank Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for presenting his excellent report (S/2007/50), which shows the dedication with which he, his predecessor, Ambassador Hasegawa, and all United Nations personnel have worked to ensure the success of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

Moreover, we wish to congratulate the people and all the authorities of Timor-Leste, without whose spirit of cooperation and responsibility peace would have been jeopardized for the long term after last year's incidents. Here, we should also thank once again the countries contributing international security forces for the resolute action and spirit of cooperation that they continue to demonstrate in their relations with the United Nations.

The Congo has always been among those that have emphasized the need for a long-term commitment to Timor-Leste, for reasons that touch on the principles of international law, international humanitarian law and solidarity aimed at preventing any threat to international peace and security. Therefore, my delegation would like to make several observations in that regard.

First, the Congo welcomes the gradual completion of the entire legal and organizational framework related to the forthcoming elections. We call for the establishment of a national electoral commission, with the agreement of all parties involved who are seriously committed to respecting the code of conduct and all rules of the electoral process. With respect to the holding of the elections, we also support

the inclusive participation of all actors in national life, at all levels, in the positive steps being taken under the auspices of the Dialogue Commission, and we encourage the role of UNMIT in carrying out the national reconciliation process.

Similarly, we urge the "Commission of Notables" to find a satisfactory solution to meet the claims on the table before the elections. The role of that structure is both novel and well-adapted to the complex situation in Timor-Leste. It will provide useful assistance to the Government, which must urgently make every effort to finalize the subsidy programme for former soldiers, on the one hand, and ensure dialogue with the fugitive former members of the military police, on the other.

However, it is clear that there is also a need to appropriately build the confidence of the Timorese in their judicial system. The joint implementation by UNMIT and the Timorese Government of an overarching strategic plan to rehabilitate the judicial sector, as envisaged, should enable that sector to restore its reputation by showing its readiness to combat impunity and to interpret the law with an abiding concern for justice for all.

While we note the importance of the recommendations of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry, we also believe that no obstacle must be allowed to prevent their implementation or that of the plan to reform, restructure and rebuild the security sector envisaged by the Government, with UNMIT's assistance.

Those are just a few of the important steps that must be taken to complete the progress made in the security sector and to lead the people of Timor-Leste — with full confidence and diversity of opinions, but also in unity — towards the elections, which are likely to ensure a stable and peaceful atmosphere for the country.

Thus, while reaffirming our total faith in the political maturity of the people of Timor-Leste, my delegation believes that we must continue to assure them of the support of UNMIT, whose mandate should be extended for 12 months to build on the actions undertaken, on the basis of the specific recommendations made by the Secretary-General.

As the Secretary-General notes in his report, if we are not careful, the upcoming elections could pose a real challenge to national unity in Timor-Leste. That is

why my delegation supports strengthening the police, as recommended by the Secretary-General, in order to ensure security during the elections, even if it means withdrawing a significant number of those elements after the elections.

Finally, my delegation would like to emphasize once again the need, after the elections, to persist in the fight against the factors that are exacerbating the crisis, such as unemployment and poverty. The implementation of the compact between Timor-Leste and the international community — with the support of most of the international development agencies — which we called for at the meeting held on 27 October 2006, will be a test for Timor-Leste, which has all the assets it needs to develop and to acquire a status within its reach: that of a democratic and prosperous nation.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Permit me at the outset to welcome the presence of Prime Minister José Ramos-Horta and to congratulate him on a strong and courageous statement. His presence among us today is tangible proof of the spirit of cooperation that inspires relations between the United Nations and the Timorese Government.

Like preceding speakers, I also wish to thank Mr. Atul Khare for his excellent briefing on the situation in Timor-Leste.

I fully subscribe to the statement to be made by the Permanent Representative of Germany in his capacity as President of the European Union. I shall thus limit myself to making a few additional remarks, which are based on three points: the elections, the national reconciliation process, and the role and mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

We know that the year ahead will be essential for the future of Timor-Leste. First, it is an election year with two important events: the presidential elections of 9 April and the legislative elections. On those occasions, it will be important to ensure that order is maintained in keeping with the law.

We are confident that, at all levels, the candidates will demonstrate a sense of responsibility and seek to overcome the divisions that appeared during the events of 2006. They must avoid reopening past wounds and reviving old hatreds, and instead look to the future.

I note that the most recent election certification mission made a number of recommendations that have

yet to be implemented. Accordingly, I would emphasize the importance of a transparent and legitimate electoral process.

However, 2007 will also be essential for healing wounds, both those that were the cause and those that were the consequence of the crisis of last April and May. Belgium wishes to recall the need to implement the 21 recommendations of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry, whose endorsement by the parliament we welcome.

As the Commission itself has rightly stressed, justice, peace and democracy are mutually reinforcing. In order to achieve peace and democracy, justice must be effective and visible. We must at all costs avoid giving the population the impression that impunity continues to exist, as that could lead to further instability. The demonstrations and the fighting that took place last week are evidence of that risk.

Political leaders in Timor-Leste have in recent weeks taken some important steps aimed at making clear to the people the efforts at dialogue and reconciliation that are being undertaken. Belgium welcomes those gestures and expresses the hope that that spirit of dialogue will be maintained.

Thirdly, let me touch on the role and mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). I should like to congratulate UNMIT on the work it has accomplished. The signing of a trilateral agreement among the Government of Timor-Leste, UNMIT and the international security forces is commendable. The measures taken against gangs earlier this month are clear evidence of the fruitful collaboration between the international forces and UNMIT.

UNMIT can now increasingly work hand in hand with the Timorese police force. However, much remains to be done. That is why Belgium supports the extension of its mandate for a period of 12 months, in line with the recommendations of Secretary-General. We support the addition of a supplemental integrated police unit for the electoral period, as requested of the Security Council in a joint letter from the President of the State, the Prime Minister and the President of the Parliament.

The people of Timor-Leste aspire to peace and stability. Our responsibility is to provide a context for those legitimate aspirations to be realized. It is in that

spirit that Belgium will contribute to the negotiations on mandate extension.

Mr. Chávez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I should like to welcome the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Ramos-Horta, and to express our appreciation for his comprehensive and candid statement. We would like also to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Atul Khare, for his briefing and to commend him for his work in the context of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

Peru would like to express its strong support for the people and the Government of Timor-Leste in their quest to ensure that their State is peaceful and sustainable in the long term. We would like also to highlight the measures that have been adopted with a view to striking up a national dialogue and achieving political reconciliation, as well as the activities being carried out in the context of a community-level dialogue designed to bring about the reintegration of internally displaced persons and to tackle the issue of social fragmentation.

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Timor-Leste for the period August 2006 to January 2007. We support his recommendations aimed at supporting the country in the areas of reconciliation and long-term development. In that context, we support the extension of UNMIT's mandate for a 12-month period. We agree with the Secretary-General that such a decision will send an important signal of the Security Council's commitment to Timor-Leste, which is vital in the light of the upcoming electoral process.

We would like to highlight the establishment of a compact between Timor-Leste and the international community aimed at the promotion of economic development in the country. We believe that, in the long term, Timor-Leste's success will depend to a considerable extent on its success in terms of economic and social development. We are pleased to hear that the Government has already taken measures to identify the most urgent priorities, which include national reconciliation, elections, security, justice, employment for young people, as well as the provision of basic services to the most needy.

We also believe that UNMIT must continue to attach priority to providing assistance to the security and justice sectors. We welcome the start of

substantive follow-up to the recommendations of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry, which, we believe, will help to strengthen the rule of law and combat impunity.

Along those same lines, we are pleased to see that the friendly relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia continue to strengthen, which will make it possible for the work of the Commission for Truth and Friendship between the two countries to continue.

The issue of security in Timor-Leste, in terms of the police and the army, must be tackled on two fronts: on the one hand, by addressing the issue of a shortfall in units, and, on the other, by seeking to bring about reconciliation between the two institutions. The security situation in Dili and in other principal cities could lead to difficulties in the holding of the general elections.

In that context, we would like to support Timor-Leste's request, made in its letter dated 7 December, that UNMIT be strengthened through the addition of a supplementary integrated police unit, so as to be able to handle any security issues that might arise during and after the elections. We also believe that any decision on the gradual drawdown of UNMIT police units following the elections should be considered very carefully, bearing in mind developments in the security situation in the field and in view of the fragility of the national police itself.

In conclusion, I should like to call on the international donor community and United Nations entities to support the consolidated appeal of 17 January focusing on the most pressing humanitarian requirements and on the protection of internally displaced persons.

Mr. Johnston (United Kingdom): May I begin my saying that the United Kingdom delegation aligns itself with the statement which will be made later by the representative of Germany on behalf of the European Union.

I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting of the Security Council on Timor-Leste. We also appreciate both the presence and the presentations of the Prime Minister and of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

This debate underlines the international community's interest in and commitment to Timor-Leste. The United Nations Mission and the bilateral

support that Timor-Leste is receiving from a number of countries are further evidence of this. Building sustainable stability in Timor-Leste is therefore our shared objective, and, in that context, the successful conduct of elections in the course of this year is a priority goal for all of us.

My delegation believes that free and fair elections will help to consolidate the progress already being made towards establishing a pluralistic political system and the norms of democratic governance in Timor-Leste. Therefore legislative, technical and logistical preparations all need to be made, and we should be ready to help with this.

But it is also important that the political leaders themselves work together to create an atmosphere conducive to the proper conduct of elections, so that, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General said in his statement, elections can have a unifying character.

We believe that there needs to be early agreement on the dates of those elections and on the processes to be followed. International norms should be the norm, including in terms of electoral campaigning and in the necessary separation of delivery of public services from the political process of seeking to influence the voting intentions of citizens.

The United Nations Mission has a key role to play in public education, in the facilitation of political dialogue and in assistance with electoral organization. Transparency in all of this must be a key criterion, and the Mission should therefore be ready to make clear to the Council and to the Government of Timor-Leste when it considers that the letter or the spirit of the electoral provisions have been violated.

Given the tense security situation in Dili, it is also important that progress be made on security sector reform, and we welcome the emphasis that the Prime Minister placed on that in his statement today. Reform of the judicial sector is also crucial. In both cases, the goal is to ensure that the elections take place within a framework that provides for long-term stability. We recognize the tension that the Prime Minister described in that area between seeking to deliver short-term results and the time needed to realize long-term investments, but early progress — not least in the context of the electoral preparations — is very important.

Further work also needs to be done — as others have recognized today — in reforming the police, the army and other relevant ministries, including to ensure that the security forces do not act politically, especially during the campaigning and the elections, as well as during the post-election period.

Progress also needs to be made in the areas of human rights and judicial capacity, in parallel with other efforts, in order to avoid creating potential difficulties once the security sector is functioning normally again.

In all of those efforts, the United Kingdom remains committed to assisting the Government and the people of Timor-Leste and to supporting the work of the United Nations Mission in this critical year and beyond as we face all of these challenges together.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like, first of all, to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting. The Chinese delegation welcomes the presence of the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, His Excellency Mr. Ramos-Horta. We would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Atul Khare, for his briefing. We would also like to express our satisfaction with the work undertaken by the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) during the past few months.

Over the past six months, Timor-Leste has made good progress in terms of national recovery and reconstruction. The political leaders have taken encouraging and important steps in conducting political dialogue and promoting national reconciliation. China appreciates those developments. We hope that the various parties in Timor-Leste will put national stability and peace for the general population above all else, and that, with the assistance of the United Nations and the international community, they will maintain the momentum of the dialogue, consolidate the results of reconciliation, resolve existing problems within a constitutional and democratic framework, and rekindle the Timorese people's hopes and confidence in the future of their country.

The elections that are to be held within the next few months will be a major milestone in the political process in Timor-Leste. They will also be a test to see whether or not Timor-Leste will move towards unity and harmony. We have noted that, under the leadership

of the Timorese Government, preparations for the elections are under way. But, of course, time is pressing. UNMIT should, on the basis of the Security Council's mandate, do its best to provide assistance to Timor-Leste. The Security Council should also fully consider and meet the legitimate requests of the Timorese Government.

The elections are neither the beginning nor the end of the political process. It must be borne in mind that there are many major issues that need to be addressed. Efforts must be intensified to build the national machinery, including the police, the judiciary and educational institutions. More important, the majority of Timorese are still suffering from poverty and want. Helping Timor-Leste to attract investment, develop its economy, expand employment and join the regional integration process will provide a fundamental guarantee for lasting peace in Timor-Leste. That calls for joint efforts and a sustained commitment on the part of the United Nations, countries of the region and other stakeholders.

Timor-Leste is a new member of the Asian family, as well as of the United Nations family. The international community has a joint responsibility to help Timor-Leste to overcome its difficulties and make the success story a lasting one. I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to the international community to sustain its interest in and support for Timor-Leste. China will continue to contribute towards peace and development in Timor-Leste.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Slovakia.

I wish to thank Prime Minister José Ramos-Horta for his candid evaluation of the situation in Timor-Leste. His statement clearly set out both the magnitude of the challenges and the promise of the opportunities in Timor-Leste. We fully agree that building a State from almost zero is a Herculean task, but we believe that Timor-Leste is on the right path to being a lasting success story of post-conflict peacebuilding. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Atul Khare, for his briefing, his valuable observations and his recommendations.

Slovakia fully associates itself with the statement to be made shortly by the Permanent Representative of Germany on behalf of the European Union. I will therefore limit my statement to a few additional remarks.

We are pleased that the situation in Timor-Leste has stabilized in the past six months. At the same time, it is obvious — as the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/50) and the briefings today indicate — that there are many challenges and problems which, if not addressed properly, might cause a relapse into conflict and violence. In that regard, we believe that the international community must sustain its commitment to peacebuilding in Timor-Leste and continue its support and assistance to the people of Timor-Leste at this crucial moment. We therefore support the recommendation of the Secretary-General that the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) be extended for a further period of 12 months.

There are many important tasks and challenges ahead in Timor-Leste, and UNMIT must have an adequate long-term perspective and proper technical and human resources to enable it to cope with the complex challenges on the ground. In that regard, we would like to ask Mr. Atul Khare about the current situation regarding the recruitment of UNMIT personnel. As we heard from Prime Minister Ramos-Horta, there are some problems, but we hope that, if the mandate of UNMIT is extended for 12 months, that might help the recruitment process.

First of all, over the next few months it will be crucial, in our view, to prepare the proper conditions for the holding of elections in Timor-Leste. We thank the Prime Minister for his update on preparations for the elections and welcome the progress made in that respect. The forthcoming elections will be a vital step on the path towards peace and stability in Timor-Leste. The United Nations and the international community are here to support the Timorese in organizing and conducting a credible process that will guarantee that its results will be accepted and respected by all stakeholders.

Overall security and stability in the country are basic preconditions for a free and fair electoral process. In that connection, we welcome the recent signing of a security agreement by UNMIT, the Timorese authorities and Australia's Government to maximize coordination in all areas of security. We also note with great concern that there are still a lot of illegal weapons in the hands of civilians. Increased efforts must be made to collect them in the months before the elections. The national police of Timor-Leste must

work very closely with the United Nations police to that end.

Secondly, it is of the utmost importance to define efficient ways to ensure sustainable social and economic development. In that regard, we welcome the Government programmes aimed at poverty reduction and job creation. For the time being, however, the challenges still exceed the Government's capacity. It is essential, therefore, that the United Nations and the international community remain actively involved in supporting social and economic development in Timor-Leste. In that respect it is, in our view, necessary to intensify efforts to marshal increased donor support and assistance.

Thirdly, it is widely recognized that military and police forces and security and law enforcement institutions in general play a crucial role in the long-term success of political and economic rebuilding efforts in post-conflict societies. The international community has been playing an active role in meeting the challenges of sustainable post-conflict security sector reform in many countries around the world. We strongly support UNMIT's continued role in assisting the Timorese authorities in the critical areas of police and military reform, including effective institutional capacity-building in the local security sector.

Fourthly, the political and civil unrest in Timor-Leste since April 2006 has led to the displacement of an estimated 150,000 Timorese, and the majority of the displaced have been unable to return to their homes to this day. We are greatly concerned about the situation of the internally displaced persons and welcome the Timorese Government's initiatives aimed at ensuring their return and reintegration into their home communities.

Finally, we would also like to reiterate our support for the process of national reconciliation and building the system of unity and trust that the country needs for its stabilization. That should not in any way mean, however, impunity for perpetrators of serious crimes and violations of human rights. To that end, we welcome and support all relevant efforts to promote justice and reconciliation in the country and between Timor-Leste and neighbouring Indonesia.

In conclusion, we believe that, after long years of suffering and grievance, the people of Timor-Leste deserve and have the right to life in peace and dignity. In that regard, I want to assure Prime Minister Ramos-

Horta of the continued support of my country for the Timorese people in their efforts to achieve lasting peace and prosperity.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Hill (Australia): We welcome the opportunity to again address the Security Council on the important issues of Timor-Leste, and thank the Council for giving those matters its attention.

We appreciate the fact that Prime Minister Ramos-Horta has been able to be with us today and to contribute to our deliberations. His considered and balanced report of the circumstances in Timor-Leste was, I think, a demonstration of what a great asset he is to his nation. The fact that he is prepared to accept the baton of leadership in such difficult circumstances is highly commendable.

Timor-Leste continues to need the sustained attention and support of United Nations Member States, and the international community willingly and generously supported Timor-Leste as it addressed the setbacks that occurred last year on its path towards successful nationhood. We welcome the ongoing and broad-ranging work of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) to address those challenges. We congratulate Mr. Atul Khare on his appointment as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and on the way in which he is carrying out the job. We thank all those who are serving in the Mission in Timor-Leste and those here at Headquarters who are giving them such professional and capable support.

We agree with the Secretary-General's comments in his most recent report that the long-term commitment of the international community to Timor-Leste remains critical to enabling Timor-Leste to return as a nation to the path of stability and development in a climate of democratic, accountable and responsive governance. We therefore strongly support the renewal of UNMIT's mandate for a further 12 months.

Australia is prepared to remain at the forefront of the efforts of the international community to assist Timor-Leste. We are currently providing some 810 troops as part of the international security force, which of course is supporting UNMIT police and United Nations personnel in maintaining law and order and

security. Australia has increased contributions to address humanitarian aspects of the crisis to some \$A10 million.

In the lead up to presidential and parliamentary elections in Timor-Leste, we welcome UNMIT's support for political and community reconciliation. We consider that Timor-Leste's political future is ultimately a matter for the Timorese people. Timor-Leste's political leaders must, of course, take responsibility for resolving their differences constitutionally and peacefully. This year's presidential and parliamentary elections will be the first national elections to be managed by the Timorese people themselves. The conduct of free, fair and transparent elections will be a critical test of the robustness of Timor-Leste's new democracy, but it will also require the support of the international community.

We welcome the United Nations provision of technical and logistical assistance to East Timor for those elections and the three-person independent electoral certification team that is monitoring the election process. We would encourage that the certification team's useful reports be acknowledged and its constructive recommendations implemented. Australia has provided \$A1.3 million to support a United Nations Development Programme project aimed at strengthening electoral institutions and processes.

UNMIT police and the international security force continue to maintain stability in Timor-Leste, which will be an especially important role in the lead-up to national elections. Whilst the overall situation has improved, obviously, since May last year, I agree with others that it continues to remain fragile.

The recent signing of two security-related arrangements — the technical arrangement covering the parameters of the international security force deployment and the memorandum of understanding establishing the Trilateral Coordination Forum — demonstrates to the Timorese people the shared commitment of the United Nations, Australia and Timor-Leste to ensuring stability and security. Those arrangements formalize the close working relationship that has developed between the United Nations, the international security force and the Timor-Leste Government.

Australia emphasizes the need to build a sustainable Timorese police force that will have the confidence and culture to be able to deal with any

future crisis of law and order in a fair and just way. We are willing to offer significant assistance to such a force. We also emphasize the need for a comprehensive and timely security sector review to address the future direction and shape of the Timor-Leste defence force. Australia stands ready again to assist in that process.

The international community has again come to the assistance of Timor-Leste. UNMIT represents an important opportunity to repair and rebuild the developing institutions that were damaged or destroyed last year and to further strengthen those institutions that did show resilience through the crisis. The international security force provides an important support function to ensure that UNMIT is able to focus on those important activities. We now encourage the people of Timor-Leste to take responsibility for their own affairs, and especially look forward to the conduct of peaceful and trouble-free elections.

The President: I call on the representative of Japan.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): I would like to thank you, Sir, for your initiative to have this debate with the participation of Prime Minister Ramos-Horta. I take this opportunity to express our high respect to Prime Minister Ramos-Horta for his untiring efforts to address many difficult issues facing his country, including particularly for national reconciliation.

I wish also to commend Special Representative of the Secretary-General Atul Khare and his team for their dedication and excellent professional work on the ground.

This debate provides a welcome opportunity for us Member States to express our continued support for peace, stability and development in Timor-Leste, as the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) is to expire at the end of this month. Timor-Leste will hold important national elections later this year — the second elections since its independence. At such a critical juncture, it is clear that the country needs strong continued support from the international community, of which UNMIT constitutes the main, indispensable component. Japan therefore supports and expects that the Security Council will take a decision to extend the mandate of UNMIT for 12 months.

The Government and people of Timor-Leste took a significant step forward at the end of last year when

their legislature adopted the election law. In accordance with that law, the presidential election is now set for April. We hope that it will be followed by national elections, with the date to be decided by consensus among the parties concerned.

For the successful conduct of the upcoming elections in a free and fair atmosphere, maintaining security and public order in the capital and throughout the country is of the utmost importance. The UNMIT police component and the international security forces must ensure such an environment in the country. In that context, we are particularly appreciative of Australia's and New Zealand's continuing contribution to the international security forces and to security sector reform in Timor-Leste. I am pleased to mention here that Japan dispatched police personnel to UNMIT this month.

We welcome the signing of the memorandum of understanding between Timor-Leste, the United Nations and Australia, as well as the technical arrangement agreed between the United Nations and the international security forces. Those two agreements complete the security arrangements between the Secretary-General and the international security forces called for in Security Council resolution 1704 (2006). They form the basis for closer cooperation between Timor-Leste, the United Nations and Australia in preparing for the elections.

We take note of the Secretary-General's report (S/2007/50), which points to the possibility of a gradual drawdown of some 600 police force contingents following an assessment of the situation after the upcoming elections. Bearing that in mind, we support his recommendation that UNMIT be reinforced with a formed police unit to ensure the success of the elections.

Another point to be emphasized is the need for close cooperation and the forging of a partnership among the political leaders of the country if peace and stability in Timor-Leste are to sustain themselves. From that point of view, we regard it as a welcome, positive step that the Government of Timor-Leste and UNMIT last month held the first meeting of the Committee on High-level Coordination provided for in resolution 1704 (2006) in order to ensure effective mutual cooperation.

Japan has been a consistent and strong supporter of Timor-Leste in recent years, in particular since that

country's independence. Last year, we were privileged to lead this forum to adopt the resolution to establish UNMIT. We intend to continue our active participation as a member of the core group on Timor-Leste.

Before concluding, I would like reiterate Japan's continued commitment to support all efforts towards sustainable peace and development beyond the peacekeeping stage. The successful conduct of the upcoming elections will be an important milestone in Timor-Leste's endeavours in the area of peacebuilding. To that end, I am pleased to announce that my Government will be organizing a peacebuilding seminar on Timor-Leste in Tokyo this March, as a case study in the context of the future work of the Peacebuilding Commission. We hope that exercise will contribute to enriching our discussion and accumulating good practices on peacebuilding.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Singapore.

Mr. Menon (Singapore): Let me begin by thanking the Secretary-General for his detailed report (S/2007/50) on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). I would also like to thank Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for his comprehensive briefing to the Security Council a short while ago. Like others, I would also like to thank Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, for his statement.

The role of the United Nations in Timor-Leste has been of great interest to my delegation. We have supported United Nations operations in Timor-Leste in various forms since the days of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, in 1999. A Singaporean is currently one of the Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in UNMIT, and we have 23 police and military officers on the ground.

It is clear from the report that UNMIT has been working hard in multiple areas. That includes the key issues of security sector reform and support for Timor-Leste's electoral process. Much ground has been covered and all the pieces are in place for a successful election. However, there are still many challenges that the country has to grapple with. In our opinion, three of those areas stand out as warranting priority attention.

First, priority must be placed on maintaining law and order. We have seen how quickly gangs of young people sprouted following the breakdown of law and order last year. Fuelled by the easy availability of illegal weapons and unemployed young people, those gangs have been responsible for much of the violence that has rocked Dili. If unchecked, they could seriously undermine the electoral process and set back all the important work that has been accomplished thus far. To ensure a smooth election and expeditious reconstruction after the election, no effort must be spared in reining in and disarming those gangs, while at the same time tackling the problem of unemployment among young people.

Secondly, there must be no let up in security sector reforms to integrate and strengthen the Timorese police, the military and the Ministries of the Interior and Defence. Every effort must be made to resolve the mistrust and rivalry between those institutions. Resources must be made available for reconstituting and normalizing the forces of the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste and the Falintil-Forças Armadas de Defesa de Timor-Leste, as well as to build up their capacity to maintain law and order.

Thirdly, we need to work on upholding the rule of law. Strengthening the country's fledgling judicial system, in terms of both capacity and capability, is vital. That is one of the most daunting tasks that confront new nations, and Timor-Leste is no exception. We are therefore pleased to note that UNMIT and the United Nations Development Programme are working hand-in-hand with national and international partners to secure the necessary resources and expertise for that purpose. We are also pleased to note that, while the Timorese Parliament has set up its own commission to determine the causes of last year's crisis, it has committed to implementing the recommendations of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry in its fight against impunity. That is an important undertaking, as it brings proper closure to the reconciliation process. It also signifies the Government's resolve to uphold the rule of law and sends a powerful message of deterrence to would-be trouble makers.

Following full independence, in 2002, and the three-year mandate of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor, which ended in May 2005, we may have been too quick in pronouncing success in Timor-Leste. We were soon reminded of how delicate

nation-building can be. What we have now is a second chance to get it right. UNMIT is a good start. It is a question of commitment. We can help by giving UNMIT strong support to fulfil its mandate.

Timor-Leste is at a critical juncture of its development as a young nation. There is still much work to be done, and the Secretary-General's recommendation to extend UNMIT's mandate by 12 months is reasonable. UNMIT must stay the course and complete the tasks. We would even venture to say that UNMIT should stay for as long as it is needed to do so. To roll back prematurely will be to repeat history.

We also support the Timorese Government's request for an additional formed police unit at a time when maintaining law and order is so crucial. We caution against that unit pulling out too soon after the election. There is much that additional United Nations police can contribute in the post-election environment, especially in maintaining peace and assisting in the police sector reforms.

Finally, we urge the United Nations to expedite the staffing of UNMIT personnel supporting security and judicial sector reforms. The present shortfalls in staffing and expertise in some of those areas is a concern, as they mean that more transgressors get away unpunished.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Matussek (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association countries of Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

Let me, first of all, express my gratitude for Prime Minister José Ramos-Horta's impressive statement to us today. On behalf of the European Union, I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his latest report (S/2007/50) on the situation in Timor-Leste. I think it is a good basis for further discussion of the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

The European Union acknowledges the important work done by the Special Representative for Timor-Leste, Mr. Atul Khare, and by the staff of UNMIT on the ground, as well as the efforts of the Timorese people, to build a viable, just and democratic State.

As the Secretary-General pointed out in his report, the overall situation in Timor-Leste has improved over the six months since UNMIT was established. However, the security situation remains volatile. Gang activity continues and there is increasing discontent among internally displaced Timorese.

One of the key elements in the peace process is the necessity of rebuilding confidence among the various actors. That is an essential step towards national reconciliation. UNMIT has begun to assist the Timorese people in this delicate task by supporting meetings, public events and dialogue programmes, which include addressing the events of the past. It is important that the forthcoming elections unite the Timorese people and not create additional divisions. All Timorese should be aware of their own responsibility to promote national reconciliation, not only in abstract, but also in concrete, terms. The forthcoming presidential and legislative elections should contribute to national unity and democratic stability in Timor-Leste. The EU endorses the recommendations of the Independent Electoral Certification Team to the Timorese authorities in order to implement key measures to ensure the full credibility of the electoral process.

It is important to note that reconciliation and viable peace can be achieved only in a secure environment. In this context, the EU Union welcomes the signing of a security agreement on 26 January by the United Nations, Timor-Leste and Australia. The agreement sets up a Trilateral Coordination Forum that will allow better coordination on security issues. This will be a particularly important element in the lead-up to the elections.

Last month, the European Commission sent an election exploratory mission to Timor-Leste. The mission will shortly submit its conclusions with a view to a likely European Union election observation mission.

The European Union also welcomes the initiative to support the electoral process with the deployment of an additional United Nations police unit in support of the Timorese national police. UNMIT's established

police units have, under adverse circumstances, helped to restore and maintain public order. That is a prerequisite if we are to implement other important elements of the mandate. Capacity-building and reform of the Timorese national police remain essential to creating an effective police force capable of addressing the security challenges. UNMIT will have an important role to play in this process. Nonetheless, screening for readmission of Timorese national police officers will need to accelerate in order to meet security needs during the elections.

As we all know, justice and accountability remain key factors for lasting peace. The EU remains concerned about the lack of progress in the judicial system and the fight against impunity. The overall capacity of the judicial system to deal with the number of arrests is still inadequate. Reports of intimidation of witnesses damage confidence in the rule of law amongst the Timorese people.

Earlier this month, the Chairman of the Commission for Truth and Friendship announced that the Commission was ready to commence the truth-seeking phase of its investigations. Seventy people suspected of human rights violations during the 1999 independence referendum events will be invited to share information from February to June 2007. We hope the Commission will prove to be an effective mechanism for dealing with the past and for building bridges to the future.

The EU supports the Secretary-General's recommendation for the extension of the UNMIT mandate for 12 months with a particular focus on maintaining public security before, during and after the elections.

Much has been achieved; much remains to be done. Most important, the Timorese themselves have to campaign for national reconciliation. This responsibility unites all political parties, the Catholic Church and civil society. It is an essential task for the Timorese people to undertake. The international community can only encourage and support this process.

The European Union and its member States have for years been major development partners with Timor-Leste. Since 1999, the EU member States and the European Community have disbursed more than €600 million to the population of Timor-Leste. European Community support amounting to €212 million so far

currently focuses on making an urgent response to humanitarian and peacebuilding needs, notably to support inclusive political dialogue and quick-impact youth employment schemes, as well as on longer-term needs such as institution-building and rural development. This assistance will take on a long-term perspective now that Timor-Leste benefits from the European Development Fund. The nomination of a special envoy and the upgrading of the European Community office in Dili into a full-fledged delegation further demonstrate the EU's willingness to strengthen its cooperation with Timor-Leste.

I would like to conclude by expressing our appreciation for the efforts of the Government of Timor-Leste and the determination of the Timorese people to build a viable, just and democratic State. The European Union is committed to remaining a reliable partner in assisting Timorese efforts to achieve long-term stability and sustainable economic development, in close coordination with other bilateral and multilateral donors.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): I would like to extend to His Excellency the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Ramos Horta, a very cordial and warm greeting. The Prime Minister's presence at this debate reflects the great significance that the Government of Timor-Leste attaches to the role that the United Nations has played in his country.

I also take this opportunity to commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Atul Khare, and all the staff of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), for their commitment and excellent work in Timor-Leste.

Portugal concurs with the statement that the representative of Germany just made on behalf of the European Union. But in my national capacity, I would like to say the following.

Portugal agrees with the Secretary-General's analysis that the overall situation in Timor-Leste has improved, although the security situation remains volatile and the political climate fluid.

From our perspective, the continued commitment of the international community and, in particular, of this Council, remains critical to securing lasting peace

and democratic stability in Timor-Leste. We must assure the Timorese people that the United Nations will support them for as long as necessary. Next week, the Security Council will have the opportunity to send that message if the Council wishes to endorse the extension of UNMIT's mandate for an additional period of 12 months, as recommended by the Secretary-General.

In the past months, the Timorese leadership has undertaken commendable efforts towards national dialogue and political reconciliation. Many challenges remain to be faced as the country prepares itself for the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections.

As there cannot be true reconciliation without justice and accountability for crimes, security and justice are essential to ensure that the elections are held in a peaceful and stable climate, so that the results are democratically accepted by all political actors in Timor-Leste. UNMIT's assistance and good offices throughout the electoral process are needed and encouraged. In that regard, allow me to refer to the recommendations of the Independent Electoral Certification Team.

The Portuguese Government also supports the strengthening of UNMIT with an additional operational police capacity of two operational platoons, consisting of 72 elements, to address security challenges during the electoral and immediate post-electoral periods. We are ready and willing to contribute to that endeavour.

Healing the wounds of the past within Timorese society is another challenge. Helping the Timorese Government to restore people's confidence in the judicial system and in the national defence and security institutions and promoting human rights is of fundamental importance. Outstanding grievances — in particular within the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) and the Falintil-Forças Armadas de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL) — can be overcome by the Timorese authorities with UNMIT's help and in close collaboration with international partners. The signature of a trilateral memorandum of understanding among the Timorese Government, the United Nations and Australia on the provision of assistance to Timor-Leste — which establishes a Trilateral Cooperation Forum — and the signature of a military technical arrangement between the United Nations and Australia are good examples of such collaboration. We hope that they will achieve the desired results.

The situation of internally displaced persons and their security in the areas of return are also of particular concern. In our opinion, it is essential to create the conditions for their return and for their resettlement in their local communities.

Portugal has always maintained that the Timorese should be the masters of their choices regarding their collective future as a nation. Whereas there continues to be a clear need for multilateral and bilateral assistance and support, the international community must be careful to provide them in a manner consistent with the sovereign options and cultural identity of Timor-Leste. As underlined in the Secretary-General's report (S/2007/50), our common efforts can be successful only if they enjoy full ownership and acceptance on the part of the Timorese stakeholders.

Portugal will remain committed to the consolidation of peace, democracy, full independence and development in Timor-Leste. We are fully confident that the Timorese people, through their efforts and determination, will be able to unite in a collective effort towards those goals.

The President: I now call on the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): I congratulate the Slovak presidency on the convening of this open debate on Timor-Leste. We thank Prime Minister José Ramos Horta for honouring the Council with his presence today, and we thank him for his comprehensive briefing. We also thank Mr. Atul Khare, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

The improvement in the overall situation in Timor-Leste since the crisis in May last year is a welcome development. We laud the national leadership and other actors for the steps that they have taken to rebuild cooperative relations among stakeholders. The establishment of UNMIT and the continued presence of international forces have also contributed positively to the restoration and maintenance of peace and security in Timor-Leste. The general positive outlook of the international community provides the necessary momentum to enable the country to recover from what we see as a momentary bump on the road towards stable nationhood.

Institutionalization of the political process is necessary to achieve national reconciliation and political stability. We support the efforts to ensure that the first post-independence general election, to be held in April this year, will be peaceful and orderly. We believe that effort should also be made to establish a sustainable socio-economic development framework for Timor-Leste. We are glad to note the assistance being provided by bilateral and multilateral partners to build the capacities of the Government of Timor-Leste.

At the Twelfth Summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, held in Cebu early this year, Prime Minister Ramos-Horta was able to have a meaningful exchange of views with the leaders of the region on possible assistance to Timor-Leste. The Philippines is assisting the country, particularly in the area of human resources development. The Philippines, through the Japan International Cooperation Agency, is currently working on several projects for Timor-Leste involving training courses in the fields of education and food processing. The transfer of human resources development expertise in the areas of local governance, rural development, community development and national budgeting is also being explored.

In addition, the Philippines is working with Timor-Leste in facilitating the admission of Timorese students to Philippine colleges and universities, as well as in providing vocational training. We hope that those efforts will aid in strengthening Timor-Leste's human resources to meet the growing requirements and challenges of regionalism, globalization and technological progress.

The Philippine commitment to Timor-Leste's nation-building is also shown through our deployment of police personnel to UNMIT. We have successively participated in the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET) and the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). To date, the Philippines is the fourth largest contingent of UNMIT, composed largely of police. Almost half of the Philippines' contribution of police personnel to United Nations missions is in UNMIT. We are also pleased to note that the United Nations Police Commissioner is Rodolfo Tor, Director of the Philippine National Police.

To ensure that the momentum is maintained in bringing Timor-Leste back, continued engagement by the international community, particularly the United Nations, is required. UNMIT has thus far made substantial progress in implementing its mandate, particularly in the areas of transitional law enforcement, police reform, elections, good offices and cooperation with bilateral and multilateral partners. We should continue to give full support to UNMIT.

It is in that regard that the Philippines supports the Secretary-General's recommendation that UNMIT's mandate be extended for a period of 12 months as an important signal of the sustained commitment of the United Nations to Timor-Leste. Given the security requirements for the elections, we also support the request by the Government of Timor-Leste for the deployment of an additional formed police unit to UNMIT.

Timor-Leste is a good example of a successful international enterprise in nation-building, engineered through the combined cooperative efforts of the United Nations, regional players and partners. When the success story of Timor-Leste is written, it will be a tale of the courage of the country's people and its leaders, the generosity of the United Nations and the international community, and the triumph of their coordinated efforts to assist a country in distress. Timor-Leste could very well be a model of best practices and lessons for countries in conflict, and we should support it.

The President: I now call on the representative of New Zealand.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): First, I should like to thank Prime Minister José Ramos-Horta and Special Representative Atul Khare for their presentations. I also thank the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Timor-Leste (S/2007/50) and note our appreciation for the valuable contribution that Mr. Khare has made in the short time that he has held his position.

New Zealand acknowledges the many efforts that have been made over the past year by the Timorese people, their leaders and the international community to return Timor-Leste to a more secure and stable path. New Zealand has participated actively in those efforts through its contributions to the international security forces and to the United Nations Mission and through bilateral channels. New Zealand's contribution to the

international security forces currently consists of a light infantry company numbering 142 personnel, involved in patrol and security operations in and about Dili. We agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that while the overall situation has improved, the security situation remains volatile. We consider that the functions being provided by the international security forces remain essential, and that coordination and cooperation between those forces and UNMIT is working well.

New Zealand strongly supports extending UNMIT's mandate for 12 months. It is important to signal an intention to sustain the commitment of the United Nations to Timor-Leste over the long term, both for practical reasons and for the reassuring message that would give to the people of Timor-Leste, a commitment that Prime Minister Ramos-Horta has asked the United Nations to make. The bulk of the work required to implement the mandate set out in Security Council resolution 1704 (2006) still lies ahead. UNMIT needs to be able to make progress in those elements of its mandate that have a longer time-frame. We are also concerned that over two thirds of UNMIT civilian staff positions have not been filled, and we believe that the initial six-month mandate was a contributing factor.

Looking ahead, New Zealand supports the Secretary-General's intention to report back to the Security Council following the elections, with possible adjustments to UNMIT's mandate and strength.

The forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections are an immediate focus. All parties in Timor-Leste should ensure that the electoral processes and framework meet international standards of credibility. UNMIT and the wider international community have an important guiding and supporting role to play. New Zealand is assisting in a variety of ways, including through the provision of voter education and media training assistance from the New Zealand Electoral Commission and through the United Nations Development Programme's multi-donor support programme.

New Zealand urges UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste to progress the comprehensive review of the security sector as a high priority. Security sector reform is an integral part of strengthening Timor-Leste's State and Government institutions and would help to improve the maintenance of stability and law

and order, as well as restore public and international confidence. We believe that, in order to succeed, the process needs to be inclusive and involve all actors, especially civil society. The review must encompass all aspects of the Timorese security sector: the Falintil-Forças Armadas de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL), the Ministry of Defence, the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) and the Ministry of the Interior. The basic roles and functions of all those bodies must be questioned and evaluated to ensure that Timor-Leste's security needs can be met now and in the future.

Similarly, addressing the significant challenges in the justice sector is another high priority. New Zealand supports the Secretary-General's proposed comprehensive judicial review. Every effort needs to be made to counter perceptions of impunity. That applies also to the events of the past year, and the follow-up to the Commission of Inquiry report.

I offer our encouragement to Prime Minister Ramos-Horta and to the Government and the people of Timor-Leste. Our friends in Timor-Leste, especially the leaders and parliamentarians, have the primary responsibility for taking the country forward in a way that promotes trust and respect. Mr. Khare and UNMIT have a crucial and supporting role, and we call for every effort to be made to provide UNMIT with the staff and tools needed to do the job.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Brazil, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, and the Slovakian delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of February as well as for presiding over this debate on Timor-Leste.

We are pleased to have Prime-Minister José Ramos-Horta here in the Council. I wish to thank him for his very informative statement on the situation in Timor-Leste. My delegation is also grateful to Mr. Atul Khare for his presentation and for the dedicated efforts he and his United Nations team, under his leadership, have made towards the success of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) in such a short time span.

The recent report of the Secretary-General on Timor-Leste is a source of both hope and concern. On one hand, it describes a series of relevant and

innovative reconciliation initiatives, which, together with the reduction in violent episodes, unveils possible scenarios of stability and sustainable development. On the other hand, the report warns that the real causes of the conflict have not been dissipated — far from it — as the public security situation remains dangerously volatile.

For Brazil, Timor-Leste constitutes an important issue on the agenda of the Security Council. Our commitment to our sister Portuguese-speaking nation has been unwavering. This is illustrated by cooperation projects we are developing with the Timorese authorities in key sectors, such as defence, education and justice. We would do more were it not for our budgetary constraints. Also, the Brazilian contribution to UNMIT, as to all previous missions, testifies to our engagement in assisting Timor-Leste to achieve political stability and a sustainable path to development, together with democracy, justice and good governance.

The multidimensional nature of UNMIT's mandate augurs well for the country. The Timorese situation requires a mission that is able to perform the tasks of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, as well as fostering development. As my delegation has stated on many occasions, peacekeeping and peacebuilding should not be seen as successive steps, but rather as basic pillars of the same endeavour.

Brazil is pleased with the recent reconciliation initiatives carried out in the country. We believe that the Timorese people will find a lasting and sustainable solution to their problems that can ensure the sovereignty of the State and the right to the social and economic development of its people.

Nevertheless, all must be aware that national reconciliation is an arduous and slow process that will require strong and continuous support from the international community in the coming years. In this process, the restructuring of the security and defence sectors and the strengthening of the justice system remain both urgent and indispensable.

In that regard, Brazil pledges to continue its support for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) programme for the consolidation of a justice system as defined by the Constitution: a civil-law matrix that employs both official languages, Tetun and Portuguese.

The task of rebuilding the national police, which is being carried out by the United Nations police, deserves careful attention. We must avoid any recurrence of the mistakes that allowed the disintegration of the police force in the wake of the turmoil of last April and May. The process of screening police personnel must be closely monitored, and the ensuing training at the police academy must be rigorous and professional.

In that respect, the Brazilian delegation endorses the request of the Secretary-General for the deployment of an additional formed police unit.

However, we are concerned at the limited number of military liaison officers. There are only 33 officers to liaise on security issues with the international security forces and the UNMIT police — including during the electoral period — and to provide the much-needed capacity to set in motion the Trilateral Coordination Forum and the military technical arrangement.

Brazil would like to acknowledge with satisfaction the conclusion of the trilateral agreement between the United Nations, the Timorese Government and the international security forces, as well as the agreement between the United Nations and Australia. Those are certainly further steps towards ensuring stability in the country.

Nonetheless, we continue to believe that the original option of a small military contingent under United Nations command and control would be the most suitable solution, as suggested in paragraph 117 of document S/2006/628.

We hope that all interested stakeholders will stand in support of another vital institution of the Timorese State — the armed forces — in a way that will prevent duplication of functions and ensure close and productive cooperation. Consistent, professional training is required, and UNMIT could play an important role in coordinating such a task.

We welcome the actions led by various institutions of the Timorese State with a view to investigating and bringing to justice all those responsible for the criminal acts perpetrated in April and May 2006. Brazil's stance is to support the decision of the Timorese institutions to apply the law without impunity.

General elections are in the offing. All parties concerned must strive for free, fair and transparent elections. Precautions must be taken to ensure the safety and security of the Timorese voters and the personnel involved in the process. The international community should support the elections within the boundaries and institutions established by the Government. Brazil is willing to shoulder its share.

In paragraph 57 of his report (S/2007/50), the Secretary-General correctly stresses that "the underlying causes of the crisis can be fully addressed in the longer term". Structural poverty and associated deprivations, including urban unemployment, must be tackled with long-term investments in infrastructure and capacity-building. Investments could bear fruit if it can be ensured that the revenues stemming from oil and gas resources are put to good use, in accordance with the needs and development priorities of the Timorese people.

The Brazilian delegation encourages the adoption of the "compact" between Timor-Leste and the international community for coordinating Government, United Nations and other multilateral and bilateral contributors to priority programmes, as set out in resolution 1704 (2006).

Brazil believes that the presence of the United Nations in Timor-Leste is essential to address the central challenges of the present crisis in its political, institutional and security dimensions.

The international community should pay heed to the social, political and economic reintegration of displaced people. Endowing those Timorese with the necessary means to regain their normal lives is an essential part of ensuring Timor-Leste's future stability.

In view of the continued need of Timor-Leste to count on the cooperation of the international community, in particular the United Nations system, at this early stage of its nation-building process, Brazil strongly supports the proposals of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of UNMIT for 12 months and to reinforce it during the electoral period.

National reconciliation, humanitarian assistance, the rule of law and the development of human resources are key priorities for Timor-Leste as it paves the way towards greater stability, sovereignty, sustainable development and democracy.

The President: I shall now give the floor to Mr. Khare to respond to the comments made and questions raised.

Mr. Khare: I would like to thank all speakers. I am particularly grateful for the kind words addressed to me and my team. I am also grateful for the suggestions that have been made to further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our interventions in Timor-Leste with a view to ensuring the success of the operations of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). These include a continuing focus on the forthcoming elections, with the implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Electoral Certification Team; justice and accountability, particularly the implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Special Commission of Inquiry; improving security and expediting the reconstitution of the Timorese national police; and making progress on the comprehensive review of the security sector. We will, of course, continue to work on those issues as our highest priority.

A few questions were raised regarding the compact. The compact in Timor-Leste is seen as a resource coordination tool, rather than as one for resource mobilization. As a first step, now that the priorities for the next two years have been identified by the Government, an operational framework will be developed in consultation with the line ministries and partners. The intention is to ensure that the operationalization of the compact builds on existing mechanisms, so as to ensure effectiveness and avoid duplication.

It is, indeed, true that UNMIT is currently operating with a fairly high civilian vacancy rate owing to a variety of factors, including the specialized job profiles required for many posts. I have made recruitment one of my personal priorities. I am delighted that, as a special case, some areas of responsibility have been delegated to UNMIT by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in order to expedite recruitment. However, I believe that the extension of the mandate for a further 12 months will be critical to our efforts to address the challenge of high civilian vacancy rates, as was, indeed, pointed out by His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

I will return to Timor-Leste tomorrow, confident of the support of the Council. In turn, I would like to assure the Council that we will do our very best so that Timor-Leste can be assisted to become a shining example of long-lasting success. I am certainly not a pessimist. But neither should we be overly optimistic, as we were a few years ago when considering the downsizing of previous operations in Timor-Leste. I believe that what is required is a sense of cautious optimism — a confidence that the leaders and the people of Timor-Leste are committed to peace, stability

and development. But converting their commitment into real, concrete outcomes will require the continued engagement of the Council and the international community.

The President: I thank Mr. Khare for his additional comments and the clarifications he provided.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.